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OF THE  
QUEENS OF ENGLAND.

A NEW EDITION.

THREE VOLUMES IN ONE.



VOLUMES FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD.



LIVES  
 OF THE  
 QUEENS OF ENGLAND,  
 FROM  
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 WITH  
 ANECDOTES OF THEIR COURTS,  
 NOW FIRST PUBLISHED FROM  
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NEW EDITION, WITH CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS.

BY  
 AGNES STRICKLAND.

The treasures of antiquity laid up  
 in old historic rolls, I opened.

BEAUMONT.

VOL. I.

PHILADELPHIA:  
 BLANCHARD AND LEA.

1852.

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TO  
HER MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,  
Our Sovereign Lady Queen Victoria,  
THE LIVES OF THE QUEENS OF ENGLAND  
ARE BY GRACIOUS PERMISSION INSCRIBED,  
WITH FEELINGS OF PROFOUND RESPECT AND LOYAL AFFECTION,  
BY HER MAJESTY'S FAITHFUL SUBJECT  
AND DEVOTED SERVANT

AGNES STRICKLAND

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OF THE

## FIRST VOLUME.

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# PREFACE

## TO

### THE FIRST EDITION.



AN announcement of this work, the first volume of which is now submitted to the public, appeared in the Literary Gazette of August 26, 1837, and other leading periodicals of the day, under its original title of "Historical Memoirs of the Queens of England." I had *previously* had the honour of communicating to her majesty, queen Victoria, that for some years I had been engaged in preparing for publication, the personal history of those royal ladies, from many of whom her own illustrious descent is derived; and I was favoured with a most gracious permission from her majesty, to dedicate the work to herself.

A long and dangerous illness delayed the publication of the first series. Meantime, the title I had chosen was appropriated by another writer, and, under that very title, memoirs have been published of *some* of the queens whose biographies, in regular and unbroken succession, are comprised in the present series of the "Lives of the Queens of England."

Biography, however, especially when historically treated, is a widely extended field, to which all labourers are freely welcomed, in this intelligent age of inquiry. Such opposite views, indeed, are taken of the same events and characters, by persons of differently constituted minds, that the cause of truth is sure to be benefited, when the research of several writers is directed to the same subjects.

"Facts, not opinions," should be the motto of every candid historian; and it is a sacred duty to assert nothing lightly, or without good evidence, of those who can no longer answer for themselves. I have borne in mind the charge which prefates the juryman's oath,—it runs as follows:—"You shall truly and justly try this cause; you shall present no one from malice; you shall excuse no one from favour," &c. &c.



Feeling myself thus charged, by each and every one of the buried queens of England, whose actions, *from the cradle to the tomb*, I was about to lay before the public, I considered the responsibility of the task, rather than the necessity of expediting the publication of the work. The number of authorities required, some of which could not be obtained in England, and the deep research among the Norman, Provençal, French, and monastic Latin chroniclers, that was indispensably necessary, made it impossible to hurry out a work which I hoped to render permanently useful.

As it has been one of my principal objects to render the Lives of our Queens a work of general interest to every class of readers, I have modernized the orthography of extracts from ancient authors, and endeavoured as much as possible to avoid prolix and minute details, on matters more suited to the researches of the antiquary than to volumes which, I would fain hope, may find a place in domestic libraries, as well as public literary institutions.

The Introduction contains brief notices of our ancient British and Saxon queens. Their records are, indeed, too scanty to admit of any other arrangement. Yet a work professing to be the history of the female royalty of our country, would have been incomplete without some mention of those princesses.

The plan of chronological arrangement adopted in this work presented, at first sight, great difficulties in writing the lives of queens who survived their royal husbands, and were involved, as queen-dowagers, with the annals of succeeding queen-consorts. Sometimes there have been two dowager-queens of England contemporaries, or two dowager-queens and a queen-consort, as in the reign of John, when Eleanor, the widow of Henry II., Berengaria, the widow of Richard I. and Isabella, the consort of John, were all in existence at the same period. In these instances, and others where it has been necessary to avoid the evil of a twice-told tale, or confusion of dates, the sequel of the queen-dowager's memoirs has been related among the chronological events of the era to which it belonged.

The biographies of the queens of England commence, in their natural order, with the life of Matilda, the consort of William the Conqueror, the first of our Anglo-Norman queens, and the mother of the succeeding line of kings, whose dynasty, in the person of our present sovereign lady, queen Victoria, occupies the throne of England. Independently of her important position among the queens of England, the incidents of the life of Matilda are peculiarly interesting, and it affords me much pleasure to make her better known to the English reader, since the rich materials of which her memoir is composed are chiefly derived from untranslated Norman and Latin chronicles.

The history of the empress Matilda is incorporated with those of the contemporary queens of England, with whose annals the events of her life are inseparably connected.

As the uniting link of the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman dynasties, as the mother of the royal line of Plantagenet kings, the empress Matilda is a character of great importance in the annals of England; but she has never been included by any historian, either ancient or modern, in the catalogue of English sovereigns. Even on her great seal she claimed no other title than that of "Domina of England;" and as she was neither a crowned nor anointed sovereign, and, though queen *de jure*, she failed to establish her rights by force, and voluntarily ceded them to her son Henry II., a separate memoir of this princess could not with propriety appear among those of the queens of England.

The life of Berengaria, the crusading queen of Richard Cœur de Lion, is for the first time presented to the public, in the second volume of this work.

The memoir of Isabella of Valois, the virgin widow of Richard II., with whose eventful history some authors are little acquainted, is included in these biographies.

The memoir of Margaret of Anjou contains a portion of her life which is at present unknown to English historians—the details of her childhood and early youth. These are derived from the most authentic sources, and comprise many new particulars, both of her personal and public life as queen of England, and the mournful epoch of her widowhood.

The life of Katharine Parr will, I venture to hope, form an attractive portion of the fifth volume of the *Lives of the Queens of England*;—my ancestral connexion with that queen affording me peculiar facilities as her biographer.

The personal histories of the Anglo-Norman and several of the Plantagenet queens are involved in such great obscurity, that it has cost years of patient research, among English and foreign chronicles, ancient records, antiquarian literature, and collateral sources of information of various kinds, to trace out the events of their lives, from the cradle to the grave. The most difficult part of the undertaking is now achieved; for the concluding volumes of the *lives and times of the queens of England* belong to eras abounding in authentic materials for royal biography. State papers, autograph letters, and other important documents, which the antiquarian taste of the present age has drawn forth, from repositories, where they have slumbered among the dust of centuries, to afford their silent, but incontrovertible evidence, on matters connected both with the public and private history of

royalty, enable those writers who, unbiassed by the leaven of party spirit, deal in facts, rather than opinions, to unravel the tangled web of falsehood, and to set forth the truth in all sincerity.

In conclusion, I have to acknowledge my obligations to his grace the duke of Norfolk, and to Mr. Howard of Corby, the descendants of queen Adelicia, for some important particulars connected with the life of that princess, for which I was indebted to the "Memorials of the Howard Family." To Mr. Howard, indeed, my thanks are peculiarly due, as well as to his accomplished son, Philip H. Howard, Esq. M.P. for Carlisle. I am likewise deeply indebted to my learned friends, Sir Thomas Phillips of Middlehill, Sir Harris Nicolas, and Sir Cuthbert Sharp, for their inestimable kindness in regard to MSS. and books of reference.

The courteous attention I have received from Sir William Woods, garter king-at-arms, and the valuable assistance afforded by G. F. Beltz, Esq. Lancaster Herald, and C. G. Young, Esq. York Herald, claim also my grateful remembrance.

My acknowledgments must likewise be offered to the Earl of Stradbrooke, Lord Manners, D. E. Davey, Esq., and other learned and noble individuals in my native county, who have facilitated my arduous undertaking, by placing their extensive and valuable libraries at my disposal; nor can I omit to express my sincere appreciation of the courteous attention and assistance I have received during my researches, from Mr. Cates and Mr. Grabham, librarians at the British Museum, and other gentlemen connected with that national treasury of learning.

My warmest thanks are due to my accomplished friend, Mademoiselle Fontaine, of Neuilly, for her unwearied kindness in supplying me with foreign chronicles, and in transcribing French documents from the "Bibliothèque du Roi," not always accessible in England: also to the Rev. J. Hunter, of the augmentation Record Office; to J. Bruce, Esq., the treasurer of the Camden Society, and the learned editor of some of its publications; to J. O. Halliwell, Esq., to whose research and literary labours that Society is so much indebted; and last, not least, to that dear sister who is my fellow-labourer and faithful assistant in the Lives of the Queens of England, though she has forbidden her name to be united on the title-page with that of

AGNES STRICKLAND.

*Rydon Hall, Suffolk,  
Dec. 16th, 1839*

# P R E F A C E

TO

## T H E   S E C O N D   E D I T I O N .



**T**HE demand for the three volumes of the "Lives of the Queens of England," already before the public, has been so unexpectedly rapid, that a very large edition has been exhausted, and a reprint of the commencing portion of the work is required, before the concluding volumes could be brought through the press.

This unusual, but most gratifying circumstance, has afforded an opportunity for corrections and additions, which, it is hoped, will render the publication more worthy of the flattering reception with which it has been honoured, both by the critical press and the public, to whom my grateful acknowledgments are due. I likewise avail myself of this circumstance to express my warmest thanks to that great historian, Dr. Lingard, for the valuable assistance he has rendered me in the present edition.

P R E F A C E

TO

T H E T H I R D E D I T I O N .

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IN introducing a third edition of these volumes of the "Lives of the Queens of England," it may be proper to state, that they have again undergone a complete and very careful revision, and that various additions have been made tending to increase the interest of the work. The publication of the seventh volume, containing the sequel of queen Elizabeth's memoirs, and the life of the first queen of Great Britain, Anne of Denmark, has been somewhat delayed, in consequence, but will be forthcoming very early in the new year.

The unequivocal tokens of national approbation, indicated by the repeated call for reprints of the series of the "Lives of the Queens of England," already before the public, while they convey a proud reward for the time and labour employed in the undertaking, will, at the same time, afford an additional stimulus for endeavouring to render the concluding volumes more worthy the attention of the lovers of historical literature.

*Reydon Hall, Suffolk,*  
*Dec. 14th, 1843.*

(xii)

## INTRODUCTION.

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"THE Queen of England," says that learned commentator on the laws and constitution of this country, Blackstone, "is either queen-regnant, queen-consort, or queen-dowager." The first of these is a female sovereign reigning in her own right, and exercising all the functions of regal authority in her own person,—as in the case of her present majesty, queen Victoria, who ascended the throne, both by rightful inheritance, the consent of the people, and also in full accordance with the ancient British custom, noticed by Tacitus in these remarkable words:—"Solent fœminarum ducta bellare, et sexum in imperiis non discernere."<sup>1</sup>

No other princess has, however, been enthroned in this land, under such auspicious circumstances as our present sovereign lady.

Mary I. was not recognised without bloodshed. Elizabeth's title was disputed. Mary II. was only a sovereign in name, and as much dependent on the will of her royal husband as a queen-consort. The archbishop of Canterbury forfeited the primacy of England, for declining to assist at her coronation, or to take the oaths. The same scruples of conscience withheld the nonjuring bishops and clergy, and many of the nobility and gentry, of England, from performing their homage either to her or to queen Anne.

Not one of those four queens, therefore, was crowned with the unanimous consent of her people. But the rapturous acclamations that drowned the pealing of the bells and the thunders of the artillery, at the recognition of our beloved liege lady, queen Victoria, in Westminster Abbey, can never be forgotten, by those who then heard the voices of a united nation uplifted in assent. I was present, and felt the massy walls of the Abbey thrill, from base to tower, with the mighty sound, as the burst of loyal enthusiasm within that august sanctuary was echoed by the thronging multitude without, hailing her queen by universal suffrage.

The queen-regnant, in addition to the cares of government, has to preside over all the arrangements connected with female royalty, which, in the reign of a married king, devolve on the queen-consort: she has, therefore, more to occupy her time and attention than a king.

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<sup>1</sup> Life of Agricola.

for whom the laws of England expressly provide, that he is not to be troubled with his wife's affairs, like an ordinary husband.

There have been but three unmarried kings of England, William Rufus, Edward V., and Edward VI. The two latter were removed at a very tender age; but the Red King was a determined bachelor, and his court, unrestrained by the presence and beneficial influence of a queen, was the focus of profaneness and all evil-doing.

The queens of England, commencing the series with Matilda, the wife of William the Conqueror, are forty in number, including her present majesty queen Victoria, the sovereign of these realms, and Adelaide, our revered queen-dowager.

Of these, five are queen-regnants, or sovereigns, and thirty-five queen-consorts. Our present series begins, not according to rank, but chronological order, with the queen-consorts, of whom there were twenty-six, before a female monarch, ascending the throne, combined in her own person the high office of queen and sovereign of England. The lives of the queen-regnants will appear in due course, our great object being to present, in a regular and connected chain, the history of female royalty, to trace the progress of civilization, learning, and refinement in this country, and to show how greatly these were affected by queenly influence in all ages.

The wives of the kings of England, though wisely excluded by the constitution of the realm from any share in the government, have frequently exercised considerable authority in affairs of state, and some have been regents of the kingdom; every one has been more or less a character of historical importance, as will be shown in their respective biographies.

The earliest British queen named in history is Cartismandua, who, though a married woman, appears to have been the sovereign of the Brigantes, reigning in her own right. This was about the year 50.

Boadicea, or Bodva, the warrior queen of the Iceni, succeeded her deceased lord, king Prasutagus, in the regal office. Speed gives us a curious print of one of her coins, in his chronicle. The description of her dress and appearance, on the morning of the battle, that ended so disastrously for the royal amazon and her country, quoted from a Roman historian, is remarkably picturesque:—

"After she had dismounted from her chariot, in which she had been driving from rank to rank to encourage her troops, attended by her daughters and her numerous army, she proceeded to a throne of marshy turfs, apparelled after the fashion of the Romans, in a loose gown of changeable colours, under which she wore a kirtle very thickly plaited, the tresses of her yellow hair hanging to the skirts of her dress. About her neck she wore a chain of gold, and bore a light spear in her hand, being of person tall, and of a comely, cheerful, and modest countenance; and so a while she stood, pausing to survey her army, and being regarded with reverential silence, she addressed to them an impassioned and eloquent speech on the wrongs of her country."

The overthrow and death of this heroic princess took place in the year 60.

There is every reason to suppose that the majestic code of laws, called the common law of England, usually attributed to Alfred, were by him derived from the laws first established by a British queen. "Martia," says Holinshed,<sup>1</sup> "surnamed Proba, or the Just, was the

<sup>1</sup> Holinshed's Description of England, vol. i., p. 298, 4to. ed.

widow of Gutline, king of the Britons, and was left protectress of the realm during the minority of her son. Perceiving much in the conduct of her subjects which needed reformation, she devised sundry wholesome laws which the Britons, after her death, named the *Martian statutes*. Alfred caused the laws of this excellently learned princess, whom all commended for her knowledge of the Greek tongue, to be established in the realm." These laws, embracing trial by jury and the just descent of property, were afterwards collated and still farther improved by Edward the Confessor, and were as pertinaciously demanded from the successors of William the Conqueror, by the Anglo-Normans, as by their Anglo-Saxon subjects.

Rowena, the wily Saxon princess, who, in an evil hour for the unhappy people of the land, became the consort of Vortigern in the year 450, is the next queen whose name occurs in our early annals.

Guiniver, the golden-haired queen of Arthur, and her faithless successor and namesake, have been so mixed up with the tales of the romance poets and troubadours, that it would be difficult to trace a single fact connected with either.

Among the queens of the Saxon Heptarchy, we hail the nursing mothers of the Christian faith in this island, who firmly established the good work begun by the British lady Claudia and the empress Helena.

The first and most illustrious of these queens was Bertha, the daughter of Cherebert, king of Paris, who had the glory of converting her pagan husband, Ethelbert, the king of Kent, to that faith of which she was so bright an ornament, and of planting the first Christian church at Canterbury. Her daughter, Ethelburga, was in like manner the means of inducing her valiant lord, Edwin, king of Northumbria, to embrace the Christian faith. Eanfled, the daughter of this illustrious pair, afterwards the consort of Oswy, king of Mercia, was the first individual who received the sacrament of baptism in Northumbria.

In the eighth century, the consorts of the Saxon kings were excluded, by a solemn law, from sharing in the honours of royalty, on account of the crimes of the queen Edburga, who had poisoned her husband, Brihtric, king of Wessex; and even when Egbert consolidated the kingdoms of the Heptarchy into an empire, of which he became the Bretwalda, or sovereign, his queen Redburga was not permitted to participate in his coronation.

Osburga, the first wife of Ethelwulph, and the mother of the great Alfred, was also debarred from this distinction; but when, on her death, or, as some historians say, her divorce, Ethelwulph espoused the beautiful and accomplished Judith, the sister of the emperor of the Franks, he violated this law, by placing her beside him on the King's Bench, and allowing her a chair of state, and all the other distinctions to which her high birth entitled her.

This afforded a pretence to his ungallant subjects, for a general revolt, headed by his eldest son Ethelbald, by whom he was deprived of half his dominions. Yet Ethelbald, on his father's death, was so captivated by the charms of the fair cause of his parricidal rebellion, that he outraged all Christian decency, by marrying her.

The beautiful and unfortunate Elgiva, the consort of Edwy, has afforded a favourite theme for poetry and romance; but the partisans of her great enemy, Dunstan, have so mystified her history, that it would be no easy matter to give an authentic account of her life.



Elfrida, the fair and false queen of Edgar, has acquired an infamous celebrity, for her remorseless hardness of heart. She did not possess the talents necessary to the accomplishment of her design, of seizing the reins of government, after she had assassinated her unfortunate step-son at Corfe Castle: for in this she was entirely circumvented by the political genius of Dunstan, the master spirit of the age.

Emma of Normandy, the beautiful queen of Ethelred, and afterwards of Canute, plays a conspicuous part in the Saxon Annals. There is a Latin treatise, written in her praise by a contemporary historian, entitled, "*Encomium Emmæ*;" but, notwithstanding the florid commendations there bestowed upon her, the character of this queen must be considered a doubtful one. The manner in which she sacrificed the interests of her children by her first husband, Ethelred, to those by her second unnatural marriage with the Danish conqueror, is little to her credit, and was certainly never forgiven by her son, Edward the Confessor; though that monarch, after he had witnessed the triumphant manner in which she cleared herself of the charges brought against her by her foes, by passing through the ordeal of walking barefoot, unscathed, over the nine red-hot ploughshares in Winchester Cathedral, threw himself at her feet in a transport of filial penitence, implored her pardon with tears, and submitted to the discipline at the high altar, as a penance for having exposed her to such a test of her innocence.<sup>1</sup>

Editha, the consort of Edward the Confessor, was not only an amiable, but a learned lady. The Saxon historian, Ingulphus, himself a scholar at Westminster Monastery, close by Editha's palace, affirms that the queen used frequently to intercept him and his school-fellows in her walks, and ask them questions on their progress in Latin, or, in the words of his translator, "moot points of grammar with them, in which she oftentimes posed them." Sometimes she gave them a piece of silver or two out of her own purse, and sent them to the palace buttery, to breakfast. She was skilful in the works of the needle, and with her own hands she embroidered the garments of her royal husband, Edward the Confessor. Editha is perhaps the most interesting of all our Saxon queens, and it was not without regret that we felt precluded, by the nature of the plan we have adopted, from including her life in the present series of the Lives of the Queens of England.

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<sup>1</sup> Milner's Winchester.

# MATILDA OF FLANDERS,

## QUEEN OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

### CHAPTER I.

Title of queen—Regina—Matilda first so called—Her descent from Alfred—Parents—Education—Learning—Beauty—Character—Skill in embroidery—Sought in marriage by William of Normandy—His passionate love—Unsuccessful courtship—Brihtric Meaw, the English envoy—Matilda's love for him—Perseverance of William of Normandy—Furious conduct of William to Matilda—Their marriage—Rich apparel—William's early life—William and Matilda excommunicated—Dispensation—Matilda's taste for architecture—Matilda's sister married to Tostig—Birth of Matilda's eldest son—Harold's visit—Betrothed to Matilda's daughter—William's invasion of England—Letter to Matilda's brother—Matilda appointed Regent of Normandy—Her son Robert—Happy arrival of Matilda in the Mora—Ship presented by her—William sails in it to England—Matilda's delineations—Battle of Hastings—News of victory brought to Matilda—Our Lady of Good Tidings.

MATILDA, the wife of William the Conqueror, was the first consort of a king of England who was called *regina*.<sup>1</sup> This was an innovation in the ancient customs of the land, for the Saxons simply styled the wife of the king "the lady his companion,"<sup>2</sup> and to them it was displeasing to hear the Normans speak of Matilda as *la reine*, as if she were a female sovereign, reigning in her own right:—so distinct in those days was the meaning attached in this country to the lofty title of *reine*, or *regina*, from that of queen, which, though at present the highest female title of honour used in England, then only signified companion.

<sup>1</sup> Thierry's Anglo-Normans. In the Domesday-book, Matilda, the wife of the Conqueror, is called Matilda Regina.

<sup>2</sup> *Hlafdige se cwene* is the Saxon phrase. *Hlafdige*, or lady, means the giver of bread. *Cwene*, or *Queen*, was anciently used as a term of equality, indiscriminately applied to both sexes. In the old Norman chronicles and poems, instead of the Duke of Normandy and his peers, the phrase used is the Duke of Normandy and his *Quens*. "The word *quen*, signifying companion," says Rapin, vol. i. p. 148, "was common both to men and women." So late as the thirteenth century, a collection of poems written by Charles of Anjou and his courtiers, is quoted as the songs of the *Quens* of Anjou. Also in a chant of the twelfth century, enumerating the war-cries of the French provinces, we find

"And the *quens* of Thibaut  
'Champagne and passavant' cry!"

The people of the land murmured among themselves at this unprecedented assumption of dignity, in the wife of their Norman sovereign; yet "the strange woman," as they called Matilda, could boast of royal Saxon blood.<sup>1</sup> She was, in fact, the direct descendant of the best and noblest of their monarchs, Alfred, through the marriage of his daughter, Elstrith, with Baldwin II. of Flanders, whose son, Arnold the Great, was the immediate ancestor of Matilda,—an interesting circumstance which history passes over in silence. Few of the queens of England, indeed, can claim a more illustrious descent than this princess. Her father, Baldwin V., surnamed the Gentle, Earl of Flanders, was the son of Baldwin IV. by Eleanora, daughter of duke Richard II. of Normandy; and her mother was Adelais, daughter of Robert, king of France, and sister to Henry, the reigning sovereign of that country. She was nearly related to the emperor of Germany, and to most of the royal families in Europe.

Matilda was born about the year 1031, and was very carefully educated. She was possessed of fine natural talents, and was no less celebrated for her learning than for her great beauty. William of Malmsbury, when speaking of this princess, says, "She was a singular mirror of prudence in our days, and the perfection of virtue."

Among her other acquirements, Matilda was particularly famed for her skill in ornamental needlework, which, in that age, was considered one of the most important and desirable accomplishments which princesses and ladies of high rank could possess. We are told by a worthy chronicler,<sup>2</sup> "That the proficiency of the four sisters of King Athelstane, in spinning, weaving, and embroidery, procured these royal spinsters the addresses of the greatest princes in Europe."

The fame of this excellent stitchery is, however, all the memorial that remains of the industry of Matilda's Saxon cousins; but her own great work, the Bayeux tapestry, is still in existence, and is, beyond all competition, the most wonderful achievement, in the gentle craft of needlework, that ever was executed by fair and royal hands. But of this we shall have to speak more fully in its proper place, as a pictorial chronicle of the conquest of England.

The earl of Flanders, Matilda's father, was a rich, powerful, and politic prince, equally skilled in the arts of war and of peace. It was to him that the town of Lille, which he rebuilt and greatly beautified, owed its subsequent greatness; and the home manufactures of his native country, through his judicious encouragement, became a source of wealth and prosperity to Flanders. His family connexion with the king of France, his *suzerain* and ally, and his intimate relationship to most of the royal houses in Europe, rendered his alliance very desirable to several of the reigning princes, his neighbours, who became suitors for the hand of his beautiful daughter.

The most accomplished of these was the young duke William of Normandy, who was not only desirous of this union in a political point

<sup>1</sup> See Matilda's pedigree in Ducarel's *Norman Antiquities*.

<sup>2</sup> Malmsbury, vol. i. book ii. p. 26.

of view, but passionately enamoured of his fair cousin. Yet William, though no less remarkable for the manly beauty of his person than for his knightly prowess in the field, and his great talents as a legislator, had, in the first instance, the mortification of receiving a very discouraging reply to his suit, not only from the parents and kindred of the young lady, but also from herself. The fact was, Matilda had bestowed her first affections on a young Saxon nobleman, named Brihtric Meaw, who had visited her father's court in the quality of ambassador from Edward the Confessor, king of England.<sup>1</sup>

Brihtric, surnamed Snaw, or Snow, from the fairness of his complexion, was the son of Algar, the lord of the honour of Gloucester, and possessed of very extensive domains in that county. He appears, however, to have been insensible to the regard with which he was distinguished by Matilda. This, together with the dark sequel of the tale, which will be subsequently related, is one of those authentic but obscure facts which occasionally tinge the page of history with the semblance of romance.

It is more than probable that the passion which Matilda cherished for the fair-haired English envoy, was the most formidable of all the obstacles with which her cousin, William of Normandy, had to contend during the tedious period of his courtship.

A less determined character would have given up the pursuit as hopeless; but William, having once fixed his mind upon this marriage, was not to be deterred by difficulties or discouragements. It was in vain that his foes and jealous kinsmen intrigued against him in the Flemish court; that the parents of the lady objected to his illegitimate birth, and his doubtful title to the duchy of Normandy; that the church of Rome interdicted a marriage between parties within the forbidden degrees of consanguinity; and, worse than all, the lady herself treated him with coldness and hauteur. After seven years' delay, William appears to have become desperate; and if we may trust the evidence of the chronicle of Inger, he, in the year 1047, waylaid Matilda in the streets of Bruges, as she was returning from mass, seized her, rolled her in the dirt, spoiled her rich array, and, not content with these outrages, struck her repeatedly, and then rode off at full speed. This Teutonic method of courtship, according to our author, brought the affair to a crisis; for Matilda, either convinced of the strength of William's passion by the violence of his behaviour, or afraid of encountering a second beating, consented to become his wife.<sup>2</sup> How he ever presumed to enter her presence again, after such a series of enormities, the chronicle saith not, and we are at a loss to imagine.

The marriage between the royal cousins took place in 1052, at William's own castle of Angi, in Normandy, whither Matilda was, with great pomp, conducted by her illustrious parents, and a noble company of knights and ladies.

<sup>1</sup>Chronicle of Tewkesbury, Cotton. MSS. Cleopatra, c. 111, 220. Leland's Collections, vol. i. p. 78. Monasticon, 111, 59. Palgrave's Rise and Progress, vol. i. p. 294. Thierry's Anglo-Normans, vol. i. p. 335.

<sup>2</sup>Chronicle of Inger, likewise called Ingerius. The anecdote has been translated by J. P. Andrews.

Wace,<sup>1</sup> in his poetical chronicle of the dukes of Normandy, says, "that the count, her father, gave Matilda joyfully, with very rich *appareillement*, that she was very fair and graceful, and that William married her by the advice of his baronage."<sup>2</sup>

The royal mantle, garnished with jewels, in which Matilda was arrayed on the day of her espousals, and also that worn by her mighty lord on the same occasion, together with his helmet, were long preserved in the treasury of the cathedral of Bayeux. Lancelot mentions an inventory of precious effects belonging to the church, dated 1476, in which these costly bridal garments are enumerated. Immediately after the marriage solemnity, William conducted his fair and royal bride to Rouen, "where," says Wace, "she was greatly served and honoured."

Nothing could be more perilous than the position of William's affairs at the period of his marriage with Matilda of Flanders. He was menaced on every side by powerful neighbours, who were eager to appropriate and parcel out the fertile fields of Normandy, to the enlargement of their respective borders; and at the same time a formidable party was arraying itself against him within his own dominions, in favour of Guy of Burgundy, the eldest son of his aunt Alice. This prince was the nearest legitimate male descendant of duke Richard the Second of Normandy; and as the direct line had failed with duke Robert, the late sovereign, he was, notwithstanding the operation of the Salic law, considered by many to possess a better right to the dukedom than the son of duke Richard by Arlotta, the skinner's daughter of Falaise. The particulars of William's birth are too well known to require recapitulation; but it is proper to notice that there are historians who maintain that Arlotta was the wife of duke Robert, though not of rank or breeding fit to be acknowledged as his duchess.<sup>3</sup> This we are disposed to regard as a mere paradox, since William, who would have been only too happy to avail himself of the plea of even a contract or promise of marriage between his parents, in order to strengthen his defective title by a pretence of legitimacy, never made any such assertion. On the contrary, not only before his victorious sword had purchased for him a more honourable surname, but even afterwards, he submitted to the use of the one derived from his mother's shame, and in the charter of the lands which he bestowed on his son-in-law, Alan, duke of Bretagne, in Yorkshire, he subscribed himself "William surnamed Bastardus."<sup>4</sup>

It is a general opinion that Arlotta was married to Herlewin of Conteville during the lifetime of duke Robert, and that this circumstance prevented any possibility of William attempting to assert that he was the legitimate offspring of his royal sire.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The author of the *Roman de Rou*.

<sup>2</sup> The nobles of Normandy, minding their duke of succession, persuaded him to marry Matilda, or Maud, daughter of Baldwin V., of Flanders.—Sandford.

<sup>3</sup> William of Malmesbury. Ingulphus.

<sup>4</sup> Leland.

<sup>5</sup> After the accession of Henry the Second to the throne, a Saxon pedigree was ingeniously invented for Arlotta, which is too great a curiosity to be omitted. "Eadmund Ironside," says the Saxon genealogist, "had two sons, Edwin and Edward, and an only daughter, whose name does not appear in history because of

According to all historians, William was, from the very moment of his birth, regarded as a child of the most singular promise. The manful grasp with which his baby hand detained the rushes of which he had "*taken seizin*"<sup>1</sup> the moment after his entrance into life, when, in consequence of the danger of his mother, he was permitted to lie unheeded on the floor of his chamber, where he first saw the light,<sup>2</sup> gave occasion to the oracular gossips in attendance on Arlotta to predict "that the child would become a mighty man, ready to acquire everything within his reach, and that which he acquired he would with a strong hand steadfastly maintain against all challengers."

It does not appear that duke Robert bestowed much notice on the babe during the early stages of infancy; indeed, the contrary may be inferred from the testimony of the historian,<sup>3</sup> who says, "When William was a year old, he was introduced into the presence of his father; and when duke Robert saw what a goodly and fair child he was, and how closely he resembled the royal line of Normandy, he embraced him, and acknowledged him to be his son, and caused him to receive princely nurture in his own palace. When William was five years old, a battalion of boys, of his own age, was placed under his command, with whom he practised the military exercise, according to the custom of those days. Over these infant followers William assumed the authority of a sovereign in miniature; and if dissensions arose among them, they always referred to his decision, and his judgments are said to have been remarkable for their acuteness and equity."<sup>4</sup> Thus early in life did the mighty Norman learn to enact the character of a leader and legislator. Nature had, indeed, eminently fitted him for the lofty station which he was afterwards destined to fill; and his powerful talents were strengthened and improved by an education such as few princes in that rude, unlettered age were so fortunate as to receive. At the age of eight years he was able to read and explain Cæsar's Commentaries.<sup>5</sup>

The beauty and early promise of this boy caused him to be regarded with peculiar interest by the Normans; but as a child of illegitimate birth, William possessed no legal claim to the succession. His title was simply founded on the appointment of the duke, his father. This prince, having no other issue, had centered all the doting affection of a father's

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her bad conduct, seeing that she formed a most imprudent alliance with the king's skinner. The king, in his anger, banished the skinner from England, together with his daughter. They both went to Normandy, where they lived on public charity, and had successively three daughters. Having one day come to Falaise to beg at duke Richard's door, the duke, struck with the beauty of the woman and her children, asked, 'who she was?' 'I am an Englishwoman,' she said, 'and of the royal blood.' The duke, on this answer, treated her with honour, took the skinner into his service, and had one of his daughters brought up in the palace. She was Arlotte or *Charlotte*, the mother of the Conqueror."—Thierry.

<sup>1</sup> The feudal term for taking possession.

<sup>2</sup> Henderson's *Life of the Conqueror*.

<sup>3</sup> William of Malmesbury.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> According to William of Malmesbury, the importance which the Conqueror placed on mental culture was great. Throughout life he was used to say "that an illiterate king was a crowned ass."

heart on the young William; and feeling naturally desirous of securing to him the ducal crown, before he set out on his mysterious pilgrimage for the Holy Land, he called the peers of Normandy together, in the Hotel de Ville, and required them to swear fealty to his son, whom he then solemnly appointed for his successor. When the princely boy, then a child of seven years old, was brought in to receive the homage of the assembled nobles, duke Robert took him in his arms, and, after kissing and passionately embracing him, he presented him to his valiant "*Quens*" as their future sovereign, with this remark, "He is little, but he will grow."<sup>1</sup>

The peers of Normandy gratified their departing lord by paying the<sup>2</sup> homage required to the young William. The duke then appointed his vassal, kinsman and friend, Alan, duke of Bretagne, seneschal of his dominions, with full power to govern the state of Normandy in his absence. Then he carried his son to Paris, and delivered him into the hands of the king of France, his *suzerain*, or paramount lord: and having received his promise of protecting and cherishing the boy with a loving care, he made William perform the same homage to that monarch as if he were already the reigning duke of Normandy; by which he secured his sovereign's recognition of the title of his little vassal-peer to the ducal crown. After these arrangements, duke Robert departed on that expedition from which he never again returned to his own dominions.<sup>3</sup>

At the court of his sovereign, Henry I. of France, the uncle of his future spouse, Matilda of Flanders, William completed his education, and learned the science of diplomacy, secure from all the factions and intrigues with which Normandy was convulsed. The states, true to the fealty they had sworn to the son of their deceased lord, sent ambassadors to

<sup>1</sup> Il est petit, mais il croitera.—Wace.

<sup>2</sup> Chronicle of Normandy. Malmesbury.

<sup>3</sup> It was whispered by some that duke Robert undertook this pilgrimage to Jerusalem as an expiatory penance for the death of his elder brother and sovereign, duke Richard III., which he was suspected of having hastened; while others believed he was impelled from motives of piety alone to pay his vows at the holy grave, according to a new but prevailing spirit of misdirected devotion, which manifested itself among the princes and nobles of that age of superstition and romance. Whether duke Robert ever reached the place of his destination, is uncertain. The last authentic tidings respecting him that reached his capital were brought by Pirou, a returned pilgrim from the Holy Land, who reported that he met his lord, the duke of Normandy, on his way to the Holy City, borne in a litter on the shoulders of four stout Saracens, being then too ill to proceed on his journey on foot. When the royal pilgrim recognised his vassal, he exclaimed, with great animation, "Tell my valiant peers that you have seen your sovereign carried towards heaven on the backs of fiends."—William of Malmesbury. Whether this uncourteous allusion to the spiritual darkness of his pagan bearers was sufficiently intelligible to them to have the effect of provoking them into shortening his journey thither, we know not. Some chronicles, indeed, assert that he died at Nicea, in Bithynia, on his return; but there is a strange uncertainty connected with his fate, and it appears that the Norman nobles long expected his return—an expectation that was probably most favourable to the cause of his youthful successor, whose title might otherwise have been more effectually disputed by the heirs of the sisters and aunts of duke Robert.

Paris, to claim their young duke.<sup>1</sup> The king of France resigned him to the deputies, but soon after invaded his dominions. William, however, was possessed of energies equal to any difficulties in which he might be placed, and he had some faithful and powerful friends among the counsellors of his late father. Raoul de Gace and Roger de Beaumont stoutly maintained the cause of their young duke, both in the court and in the camp. They were his tutors in the art of war, and through their assistance and advice he was enabled to defeat the king of France, and to maintain the dignity of a sovereign and military chief, at a period of life when princes are generally occupied in childish amusements, or the pleasures of the chase.<sup>2</sup>

One by one, almost every Norman noble who could boast any portion of the blood of Rollo, the founder of the ducal line of Normandy, was incited by king Henry of France to stir up an insurrection, as a rival claimant of the crown. On one occasion, William would in all probability have fallen a victim to the plot which his cousin Guy of Burgundy had laid to surprise him, when he was on a hunting excursion, and was to pass the night without any of his military retinue, at the castle of Valognes; but from this peril he was preserved by the fidelity of his fool, who, happening to overhear the conspirators arranging their plan, travelled all night at full speed to give the duke notice of his danger; and finding means to make an entrance into the castle at four o'clock in the morning, he struck violently with the handle of his whip at the chamber-door of his sleeping sovereign, and shouted, "Levez, levez, Seigneur!" till he succeeded in rousing him. So close at hand, however, were Guy of Burgundy and his confederates, that it was only by mounting his swiftest steed, half-dressed, and riding with fiery speed for many hours, that William could effect his escape from his pursuers; and even then he must have fallen into their hands, if he had not encountered a gentleman on the road, with whom he changed horses, his own being thoroughly spent. Guy of Burgundy was afterwards taken prisoner by the young duke; but having been on affectionate terms with him in his childhood, he generously forgave him all the trouble he had occasioned him, and his many attempts against his life.<sup>3</sup>

The king of France was preparing to attack William with redoubled fury, at the period when, by his fortunate marriage with Matilda, he strengthened his defective title to the throne of Normandy, by uniting himself with a legitimate descendant of the royal line, and at the same time acquired a powerful ally, in the person of his father-in-law, the earl of Flanders. The death of Henry averted the dark storm that lowered over Normandy; and the young Philip of France, his son and successor, having been left during his minority under the guardianship of his aunt's husband, Baldwin of Flanders, Matilda's father, William found himself entirely relieved from all present fears of hostility on the part of France.<sup>4</sup> Scarcely, however, was he preparing himself to enjoy the happiness of

<sup>1</sup>Chronicle of Normandy.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. Malsbury. Wace.

<sup>3</sup>Chronicle of Normandy. Mezerai. Wace.

<sup>4</sup>St. Marthe. Wace.



wedded life, when a cause of annoyance arose, which had been little anticipated.<sup>1</sup>

Mauger, the archbishop of Rouen, an illegitimate uncle of the young duke, who had taken great pains to prevent his marriage with Matilda of Flanders, finding all the obstacles which he had raised against it were unavailing, proceeded to pronounce sentence of excommunication against the newly-wedded pair, under the plea of its being a marriage within the forbidden degrees of consanguinity,<sup>2</sup> and therefore unlawful in the sight of man, and abominable to God.

William indignantly appealed to the pope against this sentence, who, on the parties submitting to the usual fines, nullified the archbishop's ecclesiastical censures, and granted the dispensation for the marriage, on condition of the young duke and duchess each building and endowing an abbey at Caen, and an hospital for the blind. Lanfranc, afterwards the celebrated archbishop of Canterbury, but at that time an obscure individual, to whom William had extended his protection and patronage, was intrusted with this negotiation, which he conducted with such ability as to secure to himself the favour and confidence both of William and Matilda, by whom he was, in after years, advanced to the office of tutor to their royal offspring, and finally to the highest ecclesiastical rank and power.

William and Matilda cheerfully submitted to the conditions on which the dispensation for their marriage had been granted, by founding the sister abbeys of St. Stephen and the Holy Trinity. That of St. Stephen was built and endowed by William, for a fraternity of monks, of which he made Lanfranc abbot. Matilda founded and endowed that of the Holy Trinity, for nuns. It should appear that the ground on which these holy edifices were erected was not very honestly obtained, as we shall have occasion to show hereafter.<sup>3</sup>

All that Mauger gained by his impertinent interference with the matrimonial concerns of his royal nephew, was the exposure and punishment of his own evil deeds; for William, highly exasperated at the archbishop's attempt to separate him from his bride, retaliated upon him, by calling a convocation of all the bishops of Normandy, at Lisieu, before whom he caused Mauger to be accused of several crimes and misdemeanors, especially of selling consecrated chalices, and other articles of church-plate, to supply his luxury.<sup>4</sup> Mauger, being convicted of these malpractices, was deposed from his office, and Maurilliers was elected in his room.<sup>5</sup>

All things being now tranquilly settled, William proceeded to build a royal palace within the precincts of St. Stephen's abbey, for his own residence and that of his young duchess. The great hall, or council-chamber, of this palace, was one of the most magnificent apartments at that time in Europe.

<sup>1</sup> Chronicle of Normandy. Rapin.

<sup>2</sup> Chronicle of Normandy. Matilda was the granddaughter of Eleanor of Normandy, William's aunt.

<sup>3</sup> Montfaucon. Malmesbury.

<sup>4</sup> Rapin.

<sup>5</sup> This council was held at Lisieu, anno 1055. Vide Sir Harris Nicholas's *Chronology of History*.

Matilda, inheriting from her father, Baldwin of Lille, a taste for architecture, took great delight in the progress of these stately buildings; and her foundations are among the most splendid relics of Norman grandeur. She was a munificent patroness of the arts, and afforded great encouragement to men of learning, co-operating with her husband most actively in all his paternal plans for the advancement of trade, the extension of commerce, and the general happiness of the people committed to their charge. In this they were most successful. Normandy, so long torn with contending factions, and impoverished with foreign warfare, began to taste the blessings of repose; and, under the wise government of her energetic sovereign, soon experienced the good effects of his enlightened policy.

At his own expense William built the first pier that ever was constructed, at Cherbourg.<sup>1</sup> He superintended the building and organization of fleets, traced out commodious harbours for his ships, and in a comparatively short time rendered Normandy a very considerable maritime power, and finally the mistress of the Channel.

Meantime the domestic happiness which William enjoyed with his beautiful duchess appears to have been very great. All historians have agreed that they were a most attached pair, and that, whatever might have been the previous state of Matilda's affections, they were unalterably and faithfully fixed upon her cousin from the hour she became his wife; and with reason, for William was the most devoted of husbands, and always allowed her to take the ascendant in the matrimonial scale. The confidence he reposed in her was unbounded, and very shortly after their marriage he intrusted the reins of government to her care, when he crossed over to England, to pay a visit to his friend and kinsman, Edward the Confessor. By his marriage with Matilda, William had strengthened this connexion, and added a nearer tie of relationship to the English sovereign; and he was, perhaps, willing to remind the childless monarch of that circumstance; and to recall to his memory the hospitality he had received, both at the Flemish and the Norman courts, during the period of his adversity.<sup>2</sup>

Edward "received him very honourably, and presented him with hawks and hounds, and many other fair and goodly gifts," says Wace, "as tokens of his love." Duke William had chosen his time for this visit during the exile of Godwin and his sons; and it is probable that he availed himself of their absence, to obtain from Edward the promise of being adopted as his successor to the English throne, and also to commence a series of political intrigues, connected with that mighty project, which, fourteen years afterwards, he carried into effect.

In pursuing the broad stream of history, how few writers take the trouble of tracing the under-currents by which the tide of events is influenced! The marriage of Tostig, the son of Godwin, with Judith of Flanders, the sister of Matilda, wife of William of Normandy, was one great cause of the treacherous and unnatural conduct, on his part, which decided the fate of Harold, and transferred the crown of England to the

<sup>1</sup>Henderson's *Life of William the Conqueror*.

<sup>2</sup>Higden *Polychronicon*

Norman line. During the period of their exile from England, Godwin and his family sought refuge at the court of the earl of Flanders, Tostig's father-in-law, from whom they received friendly and hospitable entertainment, and were treated by the duke and duchess of Normandy with all the marks of friendship that might reasonably be expected, in consideration of the family connexion to which we have alluded.<sup>1</sup>

Nine months after her marriage, Matilda gave birth to a son, whom William named Robert, after his father, thinking that the name of a prince, whose memory was dear to Normandy, would ensure the popularity of his heir.<sup>2</sup> The happiness of the royal pair was greatly increased by this event. In fact, nothing could exceed the terms of affection and confidence in which they lived. They were at that period reckoned the handsomest and most tenderly united couple in Europe. The fine natural talents of both had been improved, by a degree of mental cultivation very unusual in that age; and there was a similarity in their tastes and pursuits, which rendered their companionship delightful to each other in private hours, and gave to all their public acts that graceful unanimity, which could not fail of producing the happiest effects on the minds of their subjects.

The birth of Robert was followed in quick succession by that of Richard, William-Rufus, Cecilia, Agatha, Constance, Adela, Adelaide, and Gundred. During several years of peace and national prosperity, Matilda and her husband employed themselves in superintending the education of their lovely and numerous family; several of whom, according to the report of contemporary chronicles, were children of great promise.<sup>3</sup>

No very remarkable event occurs in the records of Matilda's court, till the arrival of Harold in the year 1065. Harold, having undertaken a voyage to Normandy in an open fishing-boat, was driven by stress of weather into the river Maye, in the territories of the earl of Ponthieu, by whom, with the intention of extorting a large ransom, he was seized, and immured in the dungeons of Beaurain.

The duke of Normandy, however, demanded the illustrious captive, and the earl of Ponthieu, understanding that Harold's brother was husband to the duchess of Normandy's sister, thought it most prudent to resign his prey to the family connexion by whom it was claimed.

Harold was treated with apparent friendship by William and Matilda. They even offered to bestow one of their daughters upon him in marriage,—a young lady whose age did not exceed seven years; and to her Harold permitted himself to be affianced, though without any intention of keeping his plight.

William then confided to his reluctant guest the tale of his own adoption, by Edward the Confessor, for his successor, and proceeded to extort from him a solemn oath, to render him all the assistance in his power, in furtherance of his designs on the crown of England.<sup>4</sup>

Harold, on his return to England, came to an open rupture with his

<sup>1</sup> Wace. Ingulphus. Eadmer.

<sup>2</sup> Malmsbury. Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>3</sup> Malmsbury. Wace.

<sup>4</sup> Wace. Malmsbury. Thierry.

brother Tostig. Probably he had, during his late visit to Normandy, discovered how entirely the latter was in the interest of his Flemish wife's connexions. Tostig then fled, with his wife and children, to the court of his father-in-law, the earl of Flanders, and devoted himself entirely to the cause of William of Normandy.

At this perilous crisis, when so dark a storm was slowly but surely gathering over England, a woful deterioration had taken place in the national character of the people, especially among the higher classes, who had given way to every species of luxury and licentiousness. William of Malmsbury draws the following quaint picture of their manners and proceedings at this period. "Englishmen," says he, "had then transformed themselves into the strange manners of the French, not only in their speech and behaviour, but in their deeds and characters. Their fashion in dress was to go fantastically appointed, with garments shortened to the knee. Their heads shorn, and their beards shaven all but the upper lip, on which they wore long moustaches. Their arms they loaded with massive bracelets of gold, carrying withal pictured marks upon their skins, pounced in with divers colours;" by which it is evident that the Anglo-Saxons had adopted the barbarous practice of tattooing their persons, like the rude aborigines of the island eleven centuries previous. "They were," continues our author, "accustomed to eat to repletion, and to drink to excess; while the clergy wholly addicted themselves to light and trivial literature, and could scarcely read their own breviaries." In a word, they had, according to the witness of their own chronicles, arrived at that pass of sensuality and folly which is generally supposed to provoke a national visitation, in the shape of pestilence or the sword.

"The Normans of that period," says Malmsbury, "were proudly apparelled, delicate in their food, but not gluttonous; a race inured to war, which they could scarcely live without; fierce in rushing upon the foe, and, when unequal in force, ready to use stratagem or bribery to gain their ends. They live in large houses with economy. They wish to rival their superiors. They envy their equals, and plunder their inferiors, but not unfrequently intermarry with their vassals."

Such were the general characteristics of the men whom William had rendered veterans in the art of war, and, both by precept and example, stimulated to habits of frugality, temperance, and self-control. A mighty sovereign and a mighty people,<sup>1</sup> possessing within themselves the elements of every requisite that might ensure the success of an undertaking which, by every other nation in Europe, must have been considered as little short of madness.

When the intelligence of king Edward's death, coupled with the news of Harold's assumption of the regal dignity, reached the court of Normandy, William was struck speechless with indignation and surprise, and is said to have unconsciously tied and untied the rich cordon that fastened his cloak, several times, in the first tumults of his agitation and anger.<sup>2</sup> He then gave vent to his wrath, in fierce animadversions on

<sup>1</sup> W. Malmsbury.

<sup>2</sup> Wace.

Harold's broken faith, in causing himself to be crowned king of England, in defiance of the solemn oath he had sworn to him, to support his claims.

William also complained of the affront that had been offered to his daughter by the faithless Saxon, who, regardless of his contract to the little Norman princess, just before king Edward's death, strengthened his interest with the English nobles, by marrying Alghitha, sister to the powerful earls Morcar and Edwin, and widow to Griffith, prince of Wales. This circumstance is mentioned with great bitterness in all William's proclamations and reproachful messages to Harold, and appears to have been considered by him to the full as great a villany as the assumption of the crown of England. Some of the historians who wrote near that period say, that the lady Adeliza, the affianced bride of Harold, was dead at that time; but if so, William could have had no pretext for upbraiding him with the insult he had offered to his family, by entering into another matrimonial alliance.<sup>1</sup>

When William first made known to his Norman peers his positive intention of asserting, by force of arms, his claims to the crown of England, on the plea of Edward the Confessor's verbal adoption of himself as successor to that realm, there were stormy debates among them on the subject. They were then assembled in the hall of Lillebon, where they remained long in council, but chiefly employed in complaining to one another of the warlike temper of their lord. There were, however, great differences of opinion among them, and they separated themselves into several distinct groups, because many chose to speak at once, and no one could obtain the attention of the whole assembly, but harangued as many hearers as could be prevailed on to listen to him. The majority were opposed to the idea of the expedition to England, and said they had already been grievously taxed to support the duke's foreign wars, and observed, that "they were not only poor, but in debt;" while others were no less vehement in advocating their sovereign's project, and spake "of the propriety of contributing ships and men, and crossing the sea with him." Some said, "they would," others, "that they would not;" and at last the contention among them became so fierce, that Fitz-Osborn, of Breteul, surnamed the Proud Spirit, stood forth and harangued the malcontent portion of the assembly in these words:—

"Why should you go on wrangling with your natural lord, who seeks to gain honour? You owe him service for your fiefs, and you ought to render it with all readiness. Instead of waiting for him to entreat you, you ought to hasten to him, and offer your assistance, that he may not hereafter complain that his design has failed through your delays."

"Sir," replied they, "we fear the sea, and we are not bound to serve beyond it; but do you speak to the duke for us, for we do not seem to know our own minds, and we think you will decide better for us than we can do for ourselves."<sup>2</sup>

Fitz-Osborn, thus empowered to act as their deputy, went to the duke

<sup>1</sup> Wace's *Chronicles of the Dukes of Normandy*.

<sup>2</sup> Wace.

at their head, and in their names made him the most unconditional prof-  
fers of their assistance and co-operation.

"Behold," said Fitz-Osborn, "the loving loyalty of your lieges, my lord, and their zeal for your service. They will pass with you over sea, and double their accustomed service. He who is bound to furnish twenty knights, will bring forty; he who should serve you with thirty will now serve you with sixty; and he who owes one hundred, will cheerfully pay two hundred.<sup>1</sup> For myself, I will, in good love to my sovereign, in his need, contribute sixty well-appointed ships charged with fighting men." Here the dissentient barons interrupted him with a clamour of disapprobation, exclaiming, "That he might give as much as he pleased himself, but they had never empowered him to promise such unheard-of aids for them;" and they would submit to no such exactions from their sovereign, since if they once performed double service, it would henceforth be demanded of them as a right.

"In short," continues the lively chronicler,<sup>2</sup> "they raised such an uproar, that no one could hear another speak—no one could either listen to reason, or render it for himself. Then the duke, being greatly perplexed with the noise, withdrew, and sending for the barons one by one, exerted all his powers of persuasion, to induce them to accede to his wishes, promising 'to reward them richly with Saxon spoils for the assistance he now required at their hands; and if they felt disposed to make good Fitz-Osborn's offer of double service at that time, he should receive it as a proof of their loyal affection, and never think of demanding it as a right on any future occasion.'<sup>3</sup>"

The nobles, on this conciliatory address, were pacified; and feeling that it was a much easier thing to maintain their opposition to their sovereign's wishes in the council than in the presence-chamber, began to assume a different tone, and even to express their willingness to oblige him as far as it lay in their power.<sup>4</sup>

William next invited his neighbours, the Bretons, the Angevins, and men of Boulogne, to join his banners, bribing them with promises of good pay, and a share in the spoils of *merrie* England. He even proposed to take the king of France into the alliance, offering, if he would assist him with the quota of money, men, and ships, which he required, to own him for the *suzerain*, or paramount lord of England, as well as Normandy, and to render him a liegeman's homage for that island, as well as for his continental dominions. Philip treated the idea of William's annexing England to Normandy, as an extravagant chimera,<sup>5</sup> and asked him, "Who would take care of his duchy while he was running after a kingdom?" To this sarcastic query, William replied, "That is a care that shall not need to trouble our neighbours; by the grace of God we are blessed with a prudent wife and loving subjects, who will keep our border securely during our absence."<sup>6</sup>

William entreated the young count Baldwin of Flanders, the brother of his duchess, to accompany him as a friendly ally; but the wily Fleming, with whom the family connexion seems to have had but little

<sup>1</sup> Wace's Chronicle of Normandy.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

weight, replied by asking William : "What share of England he intended to bestow on him by way of recompence ?"<sup>1</sup>

The duke, surprised at this demand, told his brother-in-law, "That he could not satisfy him on that point till he had consulted with his barons on the subject ;" but instead of naming the matter to them, he took a piece of fair parchment, and having folded it in the form of a letter, he superscribed it to count Baldwin of Flanders, and sealed it with the ducal seal, and wrote the following distich on the label that surrounded the scroll—

"Beau frère, en Angleterre vous aurez  
Ce qui dedans escript vous trouverez ;"<sup>2</sup>

which is to say, "Brother-in-law, I give you such a share of England as you shall find within this letter."

He sent the letter to the young count by a shrewd-witted page, who was much in his confidence. When Baldwin had read this promising endorsement, he broke the seal, full of expectation, but finding the parchment blank, he showed it to the bearer ; and asked what was the duke's meaning.

"Nought is written here," replied the messenger, "and nought shalt thou receive, therefore look for nothing. The honour that the duke seeks will be for the advantage of your sister and her children, and their greatness will be the advancement of yourself, and the benefit will be felt by your country ; but if you refuse your aid, then, with the blessing of God, my lord will conquer England without your help."<sup>3</sup>

But though William ventured, by means of this sarcastic device, to reprove the selfish feelings manifested by his brother-in-law, he was fain to subscribe to the only terms on which the aid of Matilda's father could be obtained, which was by securing to him and his successors a perpetual pension of 300 marks of silver annually, in the event of his succeeding in establishing himself as king of England.<sup>4</sup> According to the Flemish historians, this pension was actually paid during the life of Baldwin V. and his son Baldwin VI., but afterwards discontinued. It is certain that Matilda's family connexions rendered the most important assistance to William in the conquest of England, and her countrymen were among his bravest auxiliaries.<sup>5</sup> The earl of Flanders was, in fact, the first person to commence hostilities against Harold, by furnishing the traitor Tostig with ships, and a military force, to make a descent on England.

Tostig executed his mission more like a pirate-brigand than an accredited leader. The brave earls Morcar and Edwin drove him into Scotland, whence he passed into Norway, where he succeeded in persuading

<sup>1</sup> Wace.

<sup>2</sup> Henderson. Wace.

<sup>3</sup> Wace.

<sup>4</sup> Will. Gemeticen. p. 665, and Daniels' *Histoire de France*, vol. iii. p. 90. Baldwin Earl of Flanders furnished Tostig with sixty ships. *Malmsbury Saxon Annals*.

<sup>5</sup> Tradition makes the famous Robin Hood a descendant of Matilda's nephew, Gilbert de Gant, who attended the Conqueror to England. *Hist. of Sleaford* by Dr. Yerborough.

king Harfager to invade England at one point, simultaneously with William of Normandy's attack in another quarter of the island.<sup>1</sup>

The minds of the people of England in general were, at this momentous crisis, labouring under a painful depression, occasioned by the appearance of the splendid three-tailed comet, which became visible in their horizon at the commencement of the memorable year 1066, a few days before the death of king Edward. The unsettled state of the succession, and the superstitious spirit of the age, inclined all classes of persons to regard, with ominous feelings of dismay, any phenomenon which could be construed into a portent of evil: moreover the astrologers who had foretold the approach of this comet had thought proper to announce their prediction in an oracular Latin distich, of which the following rude couplet is a literal translation:—

“In the year one thousand and sixty-six,  
Comets to England's sons an end shall fix.”<sup>2</sup>

“About this time,” says Malmsbury, “a comet or star, denoting as they say, a change in kingdoms, appeared trailing its extended and fiery train along the sky; wherefore a certain monk of our monastery named Elmer, bowing down with terror when the bright star first became visible to his eye, prophetically exclaimed, ‘Thou art come! a matter of great lamentation to many a mother art thou come. I have seen thee long before; but now I behold thee in thy terrors, threatening destruction to this country.’”<sup>3</sup>

Wace, whom we may almost regard in the light of a contemporary chronicler, in still quainter language describes the appearance of this comet, and the impression it made on the unphilosophical star-gazers of the eleventh century. “This year a great star appeared in the heavens, shining for fourteen days, with three long rays streaming towards the south. Such a star as is wont to be seen when a kingdom is about to change its ruler. I have seen men who saw it—men who were of full age at the time of its appearance, and who lived many years afterwards.”<sup>4</sup>

The descriptions which I have just quoted, from the pen of the Norman poet and the monastic chronicler, fall far short of the marvellousness of Matilda's delineation of this comet, in the Bayeux tapestry, where the royal needle has represented it of dimensions that might well have justified the alarm of the terror-stricken group of Saxon princes, priests, and ladies, who appear to be rushing out of their pigmy dwellings, and pointing to it with unequivocal signs of horror; for, independently of the fact that it looks near enough to singe all their noses, it would inevitably have whisked the world and all its sister planets out of their orbits, if it had been of a hundredth part proportionable to the magnitude there portrayed.<sup>5</sup> Some allowance, however, ought to be made, for the exaggeration of feminine reminiscences, of an object which we can scarcely suppose to have been transferred to the embroidered

<sup>1</sup> Brompton. Saxon Annals.

<sup>4</sup> Wace.

<sup>2</sup> Henderson.

<sup>5</sup> Bayeux tapestry.

<sup>3</sup> Malmsbury.



chronicle of the conquest of England, till after the triumphant termination of William of Normandy's enterprise afforded his queen-duchess so magnificent a subject, for the employment of the skill and ingenuity of herself and the ladies of her court, in recording his achievements on canvass, by dint of needlework. But, on the eve of this adventurous expedition, we may naturally conclude, that Matilda's time and thoughts were more importantly occupied than in the labours of the loom, or the fabrication of worsted pictures; when, in addition to all her fears and anxieties in parting with her lord, we doubt not but she had, at least, as much trouble in reconciling the Norman ladies to the absence of their husbands and lovers,<sup>1</sup> as the duke had to prevail on these his valiant *quens* to accompany him on an expedition so full of peril to all parties concerned in it.

Previously to his departure to join his ships and forces assembled at the port of St. Valleri, William solemnly invested Matilda with the regency of Normandy, and entreated, "that he and his companions in arms might have the benefit of her prayers, and the prayers of her ladies, for the success of their expedition." He appointed for her council some of the wisest and most experienced men among the prelates and elder nobles of Normandy.<sup>2</sup> The most celebrated of these, for courage, ability, and wisdom, was Roger de Beaumont, and by him William recommended the duchess to be advised in all matters of domestic policy. He also associated with the duchess, in the regency, their eldest son, Robert, and this youth, who had just completed his thirteenth year, was nominally the military chief of Normandy during the absence of his sire.

The invasion of England was by no means a popular measure with any class of William's subjects; and during the time that his armament remained wind-bound at St. Valleri, the common soldiers began to murmur in their tents. "The man must be mad," they said, "to persist in going to subjugate a foreign country, since God, who withheld the wind, opposed him; that his father, who was surnamed *Robert le Diable*, purposed something of the kind, and was in like manner frustrated; and that it was the fate of that family to aspire to things beyond them, and to find God their adversary."<sup>3</sup>

When the duke heard of these disheartening reports, he called a council of his chiefs, at which it was agreed that the body of St. Valleri should be brought forth, to receive the offerings and vows of those who should feel disposed to implore his intercession for a favourable wind.<sup>4</sup> Thus artfully did he, instead of interposing the authority of a sovereign, and a military leader, to punish the language of sedition and mutiny among his troops, oppose superstition to superstition, to amuse the short-sighted instruments of his ambition. The bones of the patron saint of the port were accordingly brought forth, with great solemnity, and exposed in their shrine, on the green turf, beneath the canopy of heaven, for the double purpose of receiving the prayers of the pious and

<sup>1</sup> Wace.

<sup>2</sup> Malmsbury. Wace.

William of Poitou. Wace. Malmsbury.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

the contributions of the charitable.<sup>1</sup> The Norman chroniclers affirm that the shrine was half-buried in the heaps of gold, silver, and precious things which were showered upon it by the crowds of votaries who came to pay their respects to the saint. Thus were the malcontent Normans amused till the wind changed.

In the meantime William was agreeably surprised by the arrival of his duchess at the port, in a splendid vessel of war, called the *Mora*,<sup>2</sup> which she had caused to be built unknown to him, and adorned in the most royal style of magnificence, for his acceptance. The effigy of their youngest son (William), formed of gilded bronze, some writers say of gold, was placed at the prow of this vessel, with his face turned towards England, holding a trumpet to his lips with one hand, and bearing in the other a bow, with the arrow aimed at England.<sup>3</sup> It seemed as if the wind had only delayed in order to enable Matilda to offer this gratifying and auspicious gift to her departing lord; for scarcely had the acclamations with which it was greeted by the admiring host died away, when the long-desired breeze sprang up, "and a joyful clamour," says Malmsbury, "then arising, summoned every one to the ships." The duke himself, first launching from the continent into the deep, led the way in the *Mora*, which, by day, was distinguished by a blood-red flag,<sup>4</sup> and, as soon as it was dark, carried a light at the mast-head, as a beacon to guide the other ships. The first night the royal leader so far outsailed his followers, that when morning dawned, the *Mora* was in the mid-seas alone, without a single sail of her convoy in sight, though these were a thousand in number. Somewhat disturbed at this circumstance, William ordered the master of the *Mora* to go to the topmast and look out, and bring him word what he had seen.

The reply was, "Nothing but sea and sky." "Go up again," said the duke, "and look out." The man cried out, "That he saw four specks in the distance, like the sails of ships."

"Look once again," cried William; then the master exclaimed, "I see a forest of tall masts and a press of sails bearing gallantly towards us."<sup>5</sup>

Rough weather occurred during the voyage, but it is remarkable that, out of so numerous a fleet, only two vessels were lost. In one of these was a noted astrologer, who had taken upon himself to predict that the expedition would be entirely successful, for that Harold would resign England to the duke without a battle. William neither believed in omens nor encouraged fortune-telling, and when he heard the catastrophe of the unfortunate soothsayer, who had thought proper to join himself to the armament, shrewdly observed, "Little could he have known of the fate of others who could not foresee his own."<sup>6</sup>

On the 28th of September, 1066, the Norman fleet made the port of Pevensey, on the coast of Sussex.

Wace's Chronicle of the Norman Conquest affords a graphic picture

<sup>1</sup> Malmsbury. Wace.

<sup>2</sup> Wace.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Thierry's Anglo-Normans.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Wace. Henderson.

of the disembarkation of the duke and his armament. The knights and archers landed first.<sup>1</sup>

After the soldiers, came the carpenters, armorers, and masons, with their tools in their hands, and planes, saws, axes, and other implements slung to their sides. Last of all came the duke, who, stumbling as he leaped to shore, measured his majestic height upon the beach.

Forthwith all raised a cry of distress. "An evil sign is here!" exclaimed the superstitious Normans; but the duke, who, in recovering himself, had filled his hands with sand, cried out in a loud and cheerful voice, "See, *seigneurs*! by the splendour of God I have seized England with my two hands.<sup>2</sup> Without challenge no prize can be made, and that which I have grasped I will, by your good help, maintain."

On this, one of his followers ran forward, and snatching a handful of thatch from the roof of a hut, brought it to the duke,<sup>3</sup> exclaiming merrily, "Sire, come forward and receive *seizin*. I give you *seizin*, in token that this realm is yours."

"I accept it," replied the duke, "and may God be with us!"<sup>4</sup>

They then sat down, and dined together on the beach; after which they sought for a spot on which to rear a wooden fort, which they had brought in disjointed pieces, in their ships, from Normandy.

Matilda has, in a curious section of the Bayeux tapestry, shown us the manner in which the trusty followers of her lord carried the disjointed frame-work of this timber fortress to the shore. The soldiers assisted the carpenters and other craftsmen in this arduous undertaking, and the duke encouraged and stimulated them, in this union of labour, to such good purpose, that before even-fall they had finished their building, fortified it, and supped merrily therein. Here the duke tarried four days. William had, through the agency of Matilda's brother-in-law, Tostig, arranged measures with Harfager, king of Norway, that their attacks upon England should be simultaneous; but the contrary winds which had detained his fleets so long at St. Valleri, had speeded the sails of his northern ally, so that Harfager and Tostig entered the Tyne with three hundred ships, and commenced their work of rapine and devasta-

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<sup>1</sup> There is a tradition in the north of England, that the foremost man of this company to touch the land of promise, was the ancestor of the Stricklands of Sizergh Castle, in Westmoreland, who derive their name and arms from this circumstance. They show the sword in the ancient banqueting-room in the D'Eincourt tower of Sizergh Castle, with which it is asserted by that venerable gossip, tradition, that the redoubted chief first struck the land at Pevensey. The weapon, which appears formed for a giant's grasp, is not, however, we imagine, of earlier date than the days of Edward III., and greatly resembles the sword of state belonging to that monarch, which is shown in Westminster Abbey. It is more probable that it pertained to Sir Thomas Strickland, who attended the victorious Edward in his French campaigns, than to the Norman founder of his lineage.

<sup>2</sup> Wace. Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>3</sup> Wace. Simon Dunelm. Matthew of Westminster. This ceremony is still observed in the transfer of some copyhold estates. Formerly a turf from a field, and a piece of thatch from the roof of a tenement, were all the conveyance required to give the purchaser a legal title of possession.

<sup>4</sup> Wace.

tion a full fortnight before the arrival of the Norman armament. Harold was thus at liberty to direct his whole strength against his fraternal foe and Harfager; and the intelligence of his decisive victory at Stanford Bridge, where both Tostig and Harfager were defeated and slain, reached William four days after his landing at Pevensey,<sup>1</sup> while he lay entrenched in his wooden citadel, waiting for a communication from his confederates, before he ventured to advance farther up the country. On receiving this unfavourable news, William manifested no consternation or surprise, but, turning to his nobles, said, "You see the astrologer's prediction was false. We cannot win the land without a battle; and here I vow that if it shall please God to give me the victory, that on whatever spot it shall befall I will there build a church to be consecrated to the blessed Trinity, and to St. Martin, where perpetual prayers shall be offered for the sins of Edward the Confessor, for my own sins, the sins of Matilda my spouse, and the sins of such as have attended me in this expedition, but more particularly for the sins of such as may fall in the battle."<sup>2</sup>

This vow greatly reassured his followers, and appears to have been considered by the valiant Normans as a very comfortable arrangement. Hard work, however, it must have prepared for the priests, who had to sing and pray away the sins of all the parties specified, if we take into consideration who and what manner of people they were.

Harold, meantime, was far beyond the Humber, and in high spirits at the signal victory he had obtained at Stanford Bridge, supposing at the same time that the duke of Normandy had delayed his threatened invasion till the spring,<sup>3</sup> as the father of Matilda had deceitfully informed him. But the intelligence of the arrival of these unwelcome guests was too soon conveyed to him, by a knight from the neighbourhood of Pevensey, who had heard the outcry of the peasants on the coast of Sussex, when they saw the great fleet arrive, and being aware of the project of the Norman duke, had posted himself behind a hill, where, unseen himself, he had watched the disembarkation of this mighty host, and their proceedings on the shore, till they had built up and entrenched their wooden fortress; which, being done with such inconceivable rapidity, appeared to him like the work of enchantment. Sorely troubled at what he had seen, the knight girded on his sword, and taking lance in hand, mounted his fleetest steed, and tarried not by the way, either for rest or refreshment, till he had found Harold, to whom he communicated his alarming tidings, in these words: "The Normans have come—they have landed at Hastings, and built up a fort which they have enclosed with a foss and palisades; and they will rend the land from thee and thine, unless thou defend it well."<sup>4</sup>

In the forlorn hope of ridding himself of his formidable invader, Harold offered to purchase the departure of the Norman duke, telling him "that if silver or gold were his object, he, who had enriched himself with the spoils of the defeated king of Norway, would give him enough to satisfy both himself and his followers."

<sup>1</sup> Saxon Annals. Malmesbury. Simon Dunelm. Henry Huntingdon. Wace.

<sup>2</sup> Wace.

<sup>3</sup> Speed.

<sup>4</sup> Wace.

"Thanks for Harold's fair words," replied William, "but I did not bring so many *écus* into this country to change them for his *esterlins*.<sup>1</sup> My purpose in coming is to claim this realm, which is mine, according to the gift of king Edward, which was confirmed by Harold's oath."

"Nay, but you ask too much of us, sire," returned the messenger, by whom the pacific offer had been made; "my lord is not so pressed that he should resign his kingdom at your desire. Harold will give you nothing but what you can take from him, unless in a friendly way, as a condition for your departure, which he is willing to purchase with large store of silver and gold and fine garments; but if you accept not his offer, know that he is ready to give you battle on Saturday next, if you be in the field on that day."<sup>2</sup>

The duke accepted this challenge, and on the Friday evening preceding that fatal day for the Saxon cause, Harold planted his *ganfanon* on the very spot where Battle Abbey now stands.

The Normans and English being equally apprehensive of attack during the season of darkness, kept watch and ward that night, but employed their vigils in a very different manner.

The English, according to the report of contemporary chroniclers, kept up their spirits with a riotous carouse, crying *Wassail* and *Drink heal*,<sup>3</sup> dancing, laughing, and gambling all night. The Normans, on the contrary, being in a devout frame of mind, made confessions of their sins, and employed the precious moments in recommending themselves to the care of God. The day on which the battle was to take place being Saturday withal, they, by the advice of their spiritual directors, vowed that if the victory were awarded to them, they would never more eat flesh on that day of the week: an obligation which, till very recently, was observed by the Catholics in England.

"Odo, the warrior bishop of Bayeux, William's half-brother by the mother's side, and Goisfred, bishop of Coutances, received confessions, bestowed benedictions, and imposed penances not a few."<sup>4</sup>

The battle joined on the 14th of October, Harold's birth-day, on a spot about seven miles from Hastings, called Heathfield, where the town of Battle now stands.

When William was arming for the encounter, in his haste and agitation he unwittingly put on his hauberk the hind part before.<sup>5</sup> He quickly changed it: but, perceiving, from the looks of consternation among the bystanders, that his mistake had been observed, and construed into an omen of ill, he smilingly observed, "I have seen many a man who, if such a thing had happened to him, would not have entered the battle-field; but I never believed in omens, nor have I ever put my faith in fortune-tellers nor divinations of any kind, for my trust is in God. Let not this mischance discourage you, for if this change import aught, it is

<sup>1</sup> Wace. A play on words meaning *crowns* and *shillings*; *écu*, meaning a shield as well as the coin called a crown.

<sup>2</sup> Malmsbury. Matthew of Westminster. Wace.

<sup>3</sup> Meaning "Wish health" and "Drink health."

<sup>4</sup> Malmsbury. Wace. William of Poitou.

<sup>5</sup> Wace.

that the power of my dukedom shall be turned into a kingdom — yea, a king shall I be, who have hitherto been but a duke.”<sup>1</sup>

Then the duke called for the good steed which had been presented to him as a token of friendship by the king of Spain.

Matilda has done justice to this noble charger, in her Bayeux tapestry. It is represented as caparisoned for the battle, and led by Gualtier Giffart, the duke's squire. There is in the same group the figure of a knight armed cap-à-pié, in the close-fitting ring armour, and nasal conical helmet, worn by the Norman chivalry of that era, with a gonfanon attached to his lance, something after the fashion of the streamer which forms part of the paraphernalia of the modern lancer, with this difference only, that the gonfanon of the ancient knight was adorned with his device or armorial bearing, and served the purpose of a banner or general rallying point for his followers.

The knightly figure in the Bayeux tapestry, which I have just described, is generally believed to have been designed for the veritable effigy of the redoubtable conqueror of this realm, or at any rate as correct a resemblance of him as his loving spouse Matilda could produce in cross-stitch. He is delineated in the act of extending his hand to greet his favourite steed.

“The duke,” says Wace, “took the reins, put foot in stirrup, and mounted; and the good horse pawed, pranced, reared himself up, and curveted.” The viscount of Toazay, who stood by, thus expressed to those around him his admiration of the duke's fine appearance and noble horsemanship:<sup>2</sup>

“Never,” said he, “have I seen a man so fairly armed, nor one who rode so gallantly, and became his hauberk so well, or bore his lance so gracefully. There is no other such knight under heaven! A fair count he is, and a fair king he will be. Let him fight, and he will overcome: and shame be to him who shall fail him.”<sup>3</sup>

The Normans were drawn up in three bodies. Montgomery and Fitz-Osborn led the first, Geoffrey Martel led the second, and the duke himself headed the third, which was composed of the flower of Normandy, and kept in reserve till the proper moment for its most effective advance should be ascertained by its skilful and puissant leader.

Taillefer, the warrior minstrel of Normandy, rode gallantly at the head of the chivalry of his native land, singing the war-song of Rollo.<sup>4</sup> William had that day three horses killed under him, without losing a drop of his own blood; finding, however, that Harold had succeeded in rallying a strong body of men around him on one of the heights, with the evident intention of keeping possession of that vantage ground, till the approaching night should favour the Saxon's retreat, he made his last desperate charge upon the people of the land. In this attack it was supposed that Harold was slain by a random arrow, which was shot through the left eye into his brain.

<sup>1</sup> Wace.      <sup>2</sup> Ibid.      <sup>3</sup> Ibid. Chronicle of the Dukes of Normandy.

<sup>4</sup> Malmsbury. Matthew of Westuninster. Henry Huntingdon. Speed. Rapin. Chronicle de Bello Will. Gemeticensis.

The victorious duke pitched his tent that night in the field of the dead, which, in memory of the dreadful slaughter that had dyed the earth to crimson, was ever after called by him the vale of *Sanguelac*.<sup>1</sup> This fiercely contested battle cost William the lives of six thousand of his bravest followers; but Malmsbury, and other accredited historians of that time, rate the loss of the Saxons at threescore thousand men.<sup>2</sup>

When the duchess-regent of Normandy, Matilda, received the joyful tidings of the victory which her lord had obtained at Hastings, she was engaged in her devotions, in the chapel of the Benedictine priory of Notre Dame, in the fields near the suburbs of St. Sevre; and after returning her thanksgivings to the God of battles, for the success of her consort's arms, she ordered that the priory should henceforth be called, in memory of that circumstance, *Notre Dame de Bonnes Nouvelles*. And by that name it is distinguished to this day.<sup>3</sup>

The coronation of the mighty forefather of our present line of sovereigns took place at Westminster, on Monday the 25th of December, being Christmas-day, or, as it was called by our Saxon ancestors, Mid-winter-day. Splendid preparations were made in the sister cities of London and Westminster, for the celebration of the twofold festival, of the nativity of our Lord and the inauguration of the new sovereign. On the afternoon of Christmas eve, William of Normandy entered the city on horseback, and was greeted by the acclamations of the Londoners. He took up his lodgings that night at the palace in Blackfriars, where Bridewell now stands. Early in the morning he went by water to London-bridge, where he landed and proceeded to a house near London-stone, where, after reposing a while, he set forth with a stately cavalcade gallantly mounted, and rode to Westminster, amidst the shouts of a prodigious multitude, who were reconciled, by the excitement of the pageant, to the idea of receiving for their sovereign a man whom nature had so admirably qualified to set off the trappings of royalty.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Saxon Annals. Speed. Ordericus says it was called so long before this battle.

<sup>2</sup> The following day was devoted by the Norman conquerors to the interment of their dead; and William gave leave and licence to the Saxon peasants to perform the like charitable office to the remains of their unfortunate countrymen. Search was made for the body of Harold, but at first in vain. The spoilers had stripped and gashed the victims of the fight, so that it was difficult to distinguish between the mortal remains of the leader and the serf. Githa, the mother of Harold, had been herself unable to identify the body of her beloved son; but there was one whose fond eye no change in the object of her affection could deceive; this was a Saxon lady of great beauty, Edith, surnamed Swans-Hals, or the Swan-necked; she had formerly been on those terms with Harold which had rendered her only too familiar with his personal characteristics, and by her the corpse of her false lover was recognised. Githa, it is said, offered to purchase it of William, at the price of its weight in gold; but he yielded it without a ransom to the afflicted mother, either through a generous impulse of compassion, or with a view of conciliating the kindred of the deceased. He also cashiered a Norman soldier, who boasted of having gashed the leg of the royal Saxon after he had fallen. The mother of Harold buried her son at his royal foundation of Waltham Abbey, placing over his tomb the simple but expressive sentence, "Harold Infelix."—Thierry. Chron. of Waltham. Malmsbury.

<sup>3</sup> Ducarel's Norman Antiquities.

<sup>4</sup> Ingulphus. Ordericus Vitalis.

Next to his person rode the nobility of England, and those of Normandy followed. Up to that period, so brilliant a coronation had never been witnessed, and perhaps there have been few since that have surpassed it in splendour: it is certain that there has never been one at which so many foreign princes and peers have assisted.

In consequence of the dispute between Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, and the Pope, William chose to be crowned and consecrated by the hand of Aldred, archbishop of York,<sup>1</sup> to avoid the possibility of the ceremony being questioned at any future time. He took not the crown, however, as a right of conquest, but by consent of the people, for the archbishop, before he placed the royal circlet on his head, paused, and turning to the English nobles, asked them "if they were willing to have the duke of Normandy for their king;" to which they replied with such continuous acclamations of assent, that the vehemence of their loyalty, more noisy than sincere, had nearly been productive of the most fatal consequences. William had surrounded the abbey, and guarded its approaches with a large body of Norman soldiers, as a prudential measure, in case any attempt upon his life should be made by his new vassals; and those trusty guards without the abbey, mistaking the clamorous applause within for a seditious rising amongst the Saxons, with intent to massacre their lord and his Norman followers, in the first emotions of surprise and rage, set fire to the adjoining houses by way of reprisals. The flames rapidly communicating to the wooden buildings round about, produced great consternation, and occasioned the loss of many lives. William, and the pale and trembling assistant prelates and priests within the church, were dismayed, and faltered in the midst of the ceremonial, and with good cause; for if great exertions had not been used by the more sober-minded portion of the Norman guards, to extinguish the conflagration, which presently extended to the abbey, that magnificent edifice, with all the illustrious company within its walls, must have been consumed together. Some persons have considered this fire as the work of the Saxon populace, with intent to destroy at one blow the Norman conqueror and his followers, with such of their own countrymen as had forgotten their honour so far as to become, not only witnesses, but assistants, at the coronation of their foe. And this indeed is not improbable, if the Anglo-Saxons of that period had evinced a spirit capable of conceiving and carrying into execution a design of such terrific grandeur, for the deliverance of their country. We are, therefore, inclined to agree with all contemporary chroniclers, in attributing the conflagration to the Norman soldiery, who could by no means be appeased, till their beloved chief came out of the abbey, and shewed himself to them, in his coronation robes and diadem.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Then on Midwinter-day, archbishop Aldred hallowed him to king at Westminster, and gave him possession with the books of Christ; and also swore him, ere that he would set the crown upon his head, that he would so well govern this nation, as any king before him best did, if they would be faithful to him."—Saxon Chronicle.

<sup>2</sup> William of Poitou. Lingard.



## MATILDA OF FLANDERS, QUEEN OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

### CHAPTER II.

**Matilda assumes the title of queen of England in Normandy—Her regency there—Patronage of learning—Charities—Her vengeance on Brihtric Meaw—Obtains his lands—His imprisonment—Death in prison—William's court at Berkhamstead—Triumphant return to Normandy—Matilda awaits his landing—Triumphal Norman progresses—Revolts in England—William re-appoints Matilda regent—Embarks for England in a storm—William sends for Matilda—She arrives in England with her children—Her coronation at Winchester—Champion at her Coronation—Birth of her son Henry—Bayeux tapestry—Her dwarf artist Turolf—Her daughter betrothed to Earl Edwin—Contract broken—Queen Matilda's return to Normandy—Regent there the third time—Her passionate love for her eldest son—Death of her father—Dissensions of her brothers—Ill effects of her absence—English miseries—Separate governments of William and Matilda—King of France attacks Matilda—Her able government—Discontent of Norman ladies—Scandalous reports—William's supposed conjugal infidelity—Matilda's cruelty to her rival—Duke of Bretagne invades Normandy—Marriage with Matilda's second daughter—Princess Cicely professed—Dissensions in the royal family—Matilda's partiality to her son Robert—Her second son, Prince Richard—His death—New Forest.**

"Our mistress Matilda," says William of Poitou,<sup>1</sup> the chaplain of the Conqueror, "had already assumed the name of queen, though she was not yet crowned. She had governed Normandy during the absence of her lord with great prudence and skill." So firmly, indeed, had that authority been sustained, that, though the whole flower and strength of Normandy had followed the fortunes of their warlike duke to the shores of England, not one of the neighbouring princes had ventured to molest the duchess-regent.

It is true that her kinsman, the emperor Henry, had engaged, in event of any aggression on the part of France or Bretagne, to defend Normandy with the whole strength of Germany; and she also had a powerful neighbour and protector in the earl of Flanders, her father; but great credit was certainly due to her own political conduct, in keeping the duchy free, both from external embroilments and internal strife, at such a momentous period. Her government was very popular, as well as prosperous in Normandy,<sup>2</sup> where, surrounded by the most learned men of the age, she advanced, in no slight degree, the progress of civilization and refinement. The encouragement afforded by her to arts and

<sup>1</sup> This elegant author, who is also called Pictaviensis, was archdeacon of Lisieu. His *Chronicle of the Conquest of England* is written in very flowing language, greatly resembling in style an heroic poem. It abounds with eulogiums on his royal patron, but is extremely valuable on account of the personal history which it contains. It is sometimes called the *Domestic Chronicle of William of Normandy*.

<sup>2</sup> Ordericus Vitalis. William of Poitou.

letters, has won for this princess golden reports in the chronicle lore of that age.

Well aware was Matilda of the importance which it is to princes, to enlist in their service the pens of those who possess the power of defending or undermining thrones, and whose influence continues to bias the minds of men after the lapse of ages.

"This princess," says Ordericus Vitalis, "who derived her descent from the kings of France and emperors of Germany, was even more distinguished for the purity of her mind and manners than for her illustrious lineage. As a queen she was munificent, and liberal of her gifts. She united beauty with gentle breeding and all the graces of Christian holiness. While the victorious arms of her illustrious spouse subdued all things before him, she was indefatigable in alleviating distress in every shape, and redoubled her alms. In a word, she exceeded all commendations, and won the love of all hearts."

Such is the character which one of the most eloquent and circumstantial historians of the eleventh century has given of Matilda. Yet Ordericus Vitalis, as a contemporary witness, could scarcely have been ignorant of the dark stain which the first exercise of her newly acquired power in England has left upon her memory.

The Chronicle of Tewkesbury,<sup>1</sup> which states that Brihtric Meaw, the lord of the honour of Gloucester, when he resided at her father's court as ambassador from Edward the Confessor,<sup>2</sup> had refused to marry Matilda, adds, that in the first year of the reign of William the Conqueror, Matilda obtained from her lord the grant of all Brihtric's lands and honours, and that she then caused the unfortunate Saxon to be seized at his manor of Hanelye, and conveyed to Winchester, where he died in prison and was privately buried.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, then, does it appear that Matilda, after having filled for fourteen years a most exalted station, and enjoying the greatest happiness as a wife and mother, had secretly brooded over the bitter memory of the slight that had been offered to her in early youth, for the purpose of inflicting the deadliest vengeance in return, on the man who had rejected the love she had once condescended to offer.

This circumstance is briefly related, not in a general, but a topographical history, without comment, and it is in no slight degree confirmed by the records of the Domesday-book, where it appears that Avening,

<sup>1</sup> Chron. Tewkesbury Bib. Cottonian MSS. Cleopatra, c. 111. Monasticon, vol. iiii., p. 59. Leland's Coll., vol. i., p. 78.

<sup>2</sup> The Author of the continuation of Brut, born in the same age, and written in the reign of Henry I., son of this queen, thus alludes to this circumstance:—

"*La quele jadis quant fu pucelle,  
Ama un conte d'Angleterre,  
Brihtric Mau, le oi nomer,  
Après le roi ki fu riche ber.  
A lui la pucell envoeia messenger,  
Pur sa amour a lui procurer:  
Mais Brihtric Maude refusa.*"

Who when she was maiden  
Loved a count of England,  
Brihtric Mau he was named,  
Except the king was no richer man.  
To him the virgin sent a messenger  
His love for her to obtain:  
But Brihtric Maude refused.

<sup>3</sup> Chronicle of Tewkesbury. Thierry's Anglo-Normans.

Tewkesbury, Fairford, Thornbury, Whitenhurst, and various other possessions in Gloucestershire, belonging to Brihtric, the son of Algar, were granted to Matilda by the Conqueror, and, after her death, reverting to the crown, were by William again bestowed on their second son, William Rufus.<sup>1</sup>

Matilda, moreover, deprived Gloucester of its charter and civic liberties, merely because it was the city of the unfortunate Brihtric—perhaps, for showing some sign of resentment for his fate.

We fear that the first of our Norman queens must, on this evidence, stand convicted of the crime of wrong and robbery, if not of absolute murder; and if it had been possible to make a *post-mortem* examination on the body of the unfortunate son of Algar, sufficient reason might have been seen, perhaps, for the private nature of his interment. All this wrong was done by agency; for, if dates be correct, Matilda had not yet entered England.

A few days after his coronation, William, feeling some reason to distrust the Londoners, withdrew to his old quarters at Berkhamstead, where he kept his court, and succeeded in drawing round him many of the most influential of the Saxon princes and thanes, to whom, in return for their oaths of allegiance, he restored their estates and honours.

His next step, for the mutual satisfaction of his Norman followers and Saxon subjects, was to lay the foundation of the church and abbey of St. Martin, now called Battle Abbey, where perpetual prayers were directed to be offered up, for the repose of the souls of all who had fallen in that sanguinary conflict.

The high altar of this magnificent monument of the Norman victory was set up on the very spot where Harold's body was found, or, according to others,<sup>2</sup> where he first pitched his gonfanon.

Tranquillity was now restored in England, or things were fast progressing to that most desired consummation. William having been now six months separated from his wife and family, his desire to embrace them once more, and to display to his Norman subjects his newly acquired grandeur, induced him to revisit his native country, at a time when it would have been far more conducive to his interests to have remained in England. Previous to his departure, he placed strong Norman garrisons in all his castles; he appointed his half-brother, Odo, bishop of Bayeux,<sup>3</sup> with his faithful kinsman and friend, William Fitz-Osborn, regents of England; and carried with him to Normandy all the leading men among the Anglo-Saxons. Among these were Edgar Atheling, Morcar, Edwin, and Waltheof.<sup>4</sup> These lords, who certainly had no wish to become the companions of his voyage, were not over-pleased at the idea of swelling the pride of the Normans, by forming a part of William's triumphant pageant.

<sup>1</sup> "Infra scriptas terras tenuit Brihtric et post Regina Matilda."—Domesday book, tom. ii., p. 100. History of Gloucester.

<sup>2</sup> Malmsbury. William of Poitou.

<sup>3</sup> The son of his mother Arlotta, by Herlewin of Conteville.

<sup>4</sup> William of Poitou. Malmsbury. S. Dunelm. Walsingham. Y-Podigma.

William was determined to spend the Easter festival in Normandy, with his queen; and reckless of the seeds of disaffection and disgust which he was sowing in the bosoms of his new subjects, he re-embarked in the *Mora*, in the month of March, 1067, and with the most splendid company that ever sailed from England, he crossed the seas, and landed on his native shore, a little below the abbey of Fescamp.

Matilda was already there, with her children,<sup>1</sup> in readiness to receive and welcome her illustrious lord, who was greeted with the most enthusiastic rapture by all classes of his subjects. For joy of William's return the solemn fast of Lent was this year kept as a festival; all labour was suspended, and nothing but mirth and pleasure prevailed in his native Normandy.<sup>2</sup>

William appears to have had infinite pleasure in displaying, not only to his wife and family, but to the foreign ambassadors, the costly spoils which he had brought over from England.<sup>3</sup> The quantity and exquisite workmanship of the gold and silver plate, and withal, the richness of the embroidered garments, wrought by the skilful hands of the Anglo-Saxon ladies, (then esteemed so inestimably precious in all parts of Europe, that they were called, by distinction, *Anglicum opus*,<sup>4</sup>) excited the admiration and astonishment of all beholders; but more particularly did the splendid dress of his guards, and the magnificence and beauty of the long-haired and moustached Anglo-Saxon nobles, by whom he was attended, attract the wonder of the foreign princes and peers.

The whole summer was spent by William in a series of triumphant progresses, through the towns and cities of Normandy, with his queen-dukess.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, England, in addition to all the recent horrors of war and rapine, was suffering at one and the same time the evils attendant on a system of absenteeism, and the oppressive weight of a foreign yoke. The spirit of freedom was crushed, but not extinguished, among the people of the land; and the absence of the Conqueror was regarded as a favourable opportunity for expelling the unwelcome locusts who had fastened upon the land, and were devouring its fatness; and a secret plot was in agitation, for a simultaneous rising throughout England, for the purpose of a general massacre of the Normans.<sup>6</sup> But though the terror of William's actual presence was withdrawn for a season, he kept up a strict espionage on the proceedings of the English. The first rumour of what was going on among them, roused him from the career of pleasure which he had been pursuing. Relinquishing the idea of keeping a splendid Christmas with his beloved family, he re-appointed Matilda and his son Robert regents of Normandy, and embarking on a stormy sea, he sailed from Dieppe on the 6th of December.<sup>7</sup> On the 7th he arrived at Winchelsea, and proceeded immediately to London, to the consternation of the malcontents, who thought they were sure of him for the winter season.

He kept Christmas in London, and though he used very prompt and

<sup>1</sup> William of Poitou. Henderson.

<sup>2</sup> English work.

<sup>3</sup> William of Poitou.

<sup>4</sup> William of Poitou.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid?

<sup>6</sup> Ordericus Vitalis. *Saxon Chronicle*.

<sup>7</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

energetic measures for crushing the insurrection, he gave a conciliatory reception to such of the English prelates and nobles as ventured to attend his summons.

After the suppression of the revolt caused by the imposition of Dane-gelt, William, perceiving the disadvantages attendant on a queenless court, and feeling withal the greatest desire to enjoy the society of his beautiful consort, despatched a noble company into Normandy, to conduct Matilda and her children to England.<sup>1</sup> She joyfully obeyed the welcome mandate of her lord, and crossed the sea, with a stately cortège of nobles, knights, and ladies.<sup>2</sup> Among the learned clerks by whom she was attended was the celebrated Gui, bishop of Amiens, who had distinguished himself by an heroic poem on the defeat and fall of Harold.

Matilda arrived in England soon after Easter, in the month of April, 1068, and proceeding immediately to Winchester, was received with great joy by her lord; and preparations were instantly commenced for her coronation, which was appointed to take place in that city on Whit-Sunday.<sup>3</sup> The great festivals of the church appear in the middle ages to have been considered by the English as peculiarly auspicious days for the solemnization of coronations and marriages, if we may judge by the frequency of their occurrence at those seasons. Sunday was generally chosen for a coronation-day.

William, who had been exceedingly anxious to share his newly acquired honours with Matilda, chose to be re-crowned at the same time, to render the pageant of her consecration more imposing; and farther to conciliate the affections of his English subjects, he repeated for the second time the oath by which he engaged to govern with justice and moderation, and to preserve inviolate that great palladium of English liberty, the right of trial by jury.<sup>4</sup>

This coronation was far more splendid than that which had preceded it in Westminster Abbey, at William's first inauguration, where the absence of the queen and her ladies deprived the ceremony of much of its brilliancy, and the alarming conflagration by which it was interrupted must have greatly abridged the pomp and festivities that had been anticipated on that occasion. Here everything went off auspiciously. It was in the smiling season of the year, when the days were long and bright, without having attained to the oppressiveness of summer heat. The company, according to the report of contemporary historians, was exceedingly numerous and noble; and the Conqueror, who appears to have been in a wonderfully gracious mood on that day, was very sprightly and facetious on the occasion, and conferred favours on all who solicited. The graceful and majestic person of queen Matilda, and the number and beauty of her fine children, charmed the populace, and every one present was delighted with the order and regularity with which this attractive pageant was conducted.<sup>5</sup>

The nobles of Normandy attended their duchess to the church; but

<sup>1</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Florence of Worcester. S. Dunelm. M. Westminster.

<sup>4</sup> S. Dunelm. Saxon Chronicle.

<sup>5</sup> Henderson.

after the crown was placed on her head by Aldred, archbishop of York, she was served by her new subjects, the English.

The first occasion on which the office of champion was instituted, is said to have been at this splendid coronation at Winchester, where William caused his consort to be associated with himself, in all the honours of royalty.<sup>1</sup>

The splendid ceremonial of Matilda's inauguration banquet afforded precedents for most of the grand feudal offices at subsequent coronations.<sup>2</sup> Among these, the office of grand pannetier has been for some time extinct. His service was to bear the salt and the carving-knives from the pantry to the king's dining-table, and his fees were the salt-cellars, spoons, and knives laid on the royal table; "forks were not among the royal luxuries at the board of the mighty William and his fair Matilda, who both, in feeding themselves, verified the proverb which says 'that fingers were made before forks.'" "The grand pannetier likewise served the bread to the sovereigns, and received, in addition to the rest of his fees, the bread-cover, called the cover-pane. For this service the Beauchamps held the manor of Beauchamp Kibworth. The manor of Addington was likewise granted by the Conqueror to Tezelin, his cook, for composing a dish of white soup called dillegroust, which especially pleased the royal palate."

"When the noble company had retired from the church, and were seated at dinner in the banqueting hall," says Henderson, in his life of the Conqueror, "a bold cavalier called Marmion,<sup>3</sup> completely armed, rode into the hall, and did at three several times repeat this challenge:—

"If any person denies that our most gracious sovereign, Lord William, and his spouse Matilda, are not king and queen of England, he is a false-hearted traitor and a liar; and here I, as champion, do challenge him to single combat."

No person accepted the challenge, and Matilda was called *la reine* ever after.

The same year, Matilda brought into the world her fourth son, Henry, surnamed Beauclerk. This event took place at Selby, in Yorkshire, and was productive of some degree of satisfaction to the people, who considered the English-born prince with far more complacency than his three Norman brethren, Robert, Richard, and William Rufus. Matilda settled upon her new-born son all the lands she possessed in England and Normandy; they were to revert to him after her death.

Tranquillity now appeared to be completely restored; and Matilda,

<sup>1</sup> Henderson.

<sup>2</sup> Glories of Regality.

<sup>3</sup> Henderson inaccurately says Dymock; it was Marmion. This ceremony, unknown among the Saxon monarchs, was of Norman origin. The lands of Fontenaye, in Normandy, were held by Marmion, one of the followers of William the Conqueror, on the tenure of championship. The office was hereditary in the family of Marmion, and from them, by heirship, descended to the Dymocks of Scrivelsbye.—See Dugdale. The armorial bearings of the Marmions, from the performance of this great feudal service, were, sable, an arming sword, the point in chief argent.—Glories of Regality.

enjoying every happiness as a wife, a mother, and a queen, seemed to be placed at the very summit of earthly prosperity.

Whether it be by accident, or owing to a close attention to the reality he saw before him, it is certain that the antique limner who drew Matilda's portrait, has represented the organ of constructiveness in her head, as very decidedly developed. It is singular, too, that of this propensity, her tastes and pursuits afforded remarkable instances, in the noble ecclesiastical buildings of which she was the foundress; and in her ingenious and curious example of industry, in the Bayeux tapestry, wherein she has wrought the epic of her husband's exploits, from Harold's first landing in Normandy to his fall at Hastings.

It is, in fact, a most important historical document, in which the events and costume of that momentous period have been faithfully preserved to us, by the indefatigable fingers of the first of our Norman queens, and certainly deserves a particular description.

This curious monument of antiquity is still preserved in the cathedral of Bayeux, where it is distinguished by the name of "the duke of Normandy's *toilette*;" which simply means the duke's great cloth.

It is a piece of canvas, about nineteen inches in breadth, but upwards of sixty-seven yards in length, on which, as we have said, is embroidered the history of the Conquest of England by William of Normandy, commencing with the visit of Harold to the Norman court, and ending with his death at the battle of Hastings, 1066.

The leading transactions of these eventful years, the death of Edward the Confessor, and the coronation of Harold, in the chamber of the royal dead, are represented in the clearest and most regular order, in this piece of needlework, which contains many hundred figures of men, horses, birds, beasts, trees, houses, castles, and churches, all executed in their proper colours, with names and inscriptions over them, to elucidate the story.<sup>1</sup>

This pictorial chronicle of her mighty consort's achievements appears

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<sup>1</sup> The Bayeux tapestry has lately been much the subject of controversy among some learned individuals, who are determined to deprive Matilda of her traditional fame, as the person from whom this specimen of female skill and industry emanated. Montfaucon, Thierry, Planché, Ducarel, Taylor, and many other equally important authorities, may be quoted in support of the historical tradition, that it was the work of Matilda and her ladies. The brief limits to which we are confined in these Biographies, will not admit of our entering into the arguments of those who dispute the fact, though we have carefully examined them; and, with due deference to the judgment of the lords of the creation, on all subjects connected with policy and science, we venture to think our learned friends, the archaeologists and antiquaries, would do well to direct their intellectual powers to more masculine objects of inquiry, and leave the question of the Bayeux tapestry, (with all other matters allied to needle-craft,) to the decision of the ladies, to whose province it peculiarly belongs. It is matter of doubt to us whether one out of the many gentlemen who have disputed Matilda's claims to that work, if called upon to execute a copy of either of the figures on canvas, would know how to put in the first stitch. The whole of the Bayeux tapestry has been engraved, and coloured like the original, by the Society of Antiquaries, who, if they had done nothing else to merit the approbation of the historical world, would have deserved it for this alone.

to have been, in part at least, designed for Matilda by Turolde, a dwarf artist, who, moved by a natural desire of claiming his share in the celebrity which he foresaw would attach to the work, has cunningly introduced his own effigies and name, thus authenticating the Norman tradition, that he was the person who illuminated the canvas with the proper outlines and colours.<sup>1</sup>

It is probable that the wife of the Conqueror, and her Norman ladies, were materially assisted in this stupendous work of feminine skill and patience, by some of the hapless daughters of the land, who, like the Grecian captives described by Homer, were employed in recording the story of their own reverses, and the triumphs of their haughty foes.

About this period William laid the foundation of that mighty fortress and royal residence, the Tower of London, which was erected by a priestly architect and engineer, Gundulph, bishop of Rochester. He also built the castle of Hurstmonceaux, on the spot which had, in the first instance, been occupied by the wooden fort which he had brought over from Normandy, and, for the better security of his government, built and strongly garrisoned many other strong fortresses, forming a regular chain of military stations, from one end of England to the other.<sup>2</sup> These proceedings were regarded with jealous displeasure, by such of the Anglo-Saxon nobles as had hitherto maintained a sort of passive amity with their Norman sovereign, and they began gradually to desert his court. Among the first to withdraw from the royal circle were the mighty Saxon brethren, Edwin and Morcar. They were the darlings of the people, and secretly favoured by the clergy. A third part of England was under their authority, and the reigning prince of Wales was their nephew. William had in the first instance endeavoured, by the most insidious caresses, to conciliate Edwin, who was the youngest of the two, and remarkable for the beauty of his person, and his noble and engaging qualities. The Conqueror had actually promised to give him one of his daughters in marriage.<sup>3</sup> When, however, the young nobleman demanded his bride, he met with a denial, at which he was so much exasperated, that he retired with his brother into the north, where they organized a plan with the kings of Scotland and Denmark, and the princes of Wales, for separate but simultaneous attacks upon William, in which the disaffected Saxons were to join. The prompt and energetic measures of the Conqueror defeated their projects before they could be brought to maturity; the brother earls were compelled to sue for pardon, and obtained a deceitful amnesty.

<sup>1</sup> Thierry's History of the Anglo-Normans. The figures were, in fact, always prepared for tapestry work by some skilful artist, who designed and traced them out in the same colours that were to be used in silk or woollen by the embroideress; and we are told in the life of St. Dunstan, "that a certain religious lady, being moved with a desire of embroidering a sacerdotal vestment, earnestly entreated the future chancellor of England, who was then a young man in an obscure station of life, but creeping into notice through his excellent taste in such delineations, to draw the flowers and figures which she afterwards formed with threads of gold."

<sup>2</sup> At Norwich, Warwick, Lincoln, York, Nottingham, &c. &c.

<sup>3</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.



The repeated and formidable revolts of the English, in 1069, compelled William to provide for the safety of Matilda and her children in Normandy.<sup>1</sup> The presence of the queen-duchess was, indeed, no less required there, than that of her warlike lord in England. She was greatly beloved in the duchy, where her government was considered exceedingly able, and the people were beginning to murmur at the absence of the court and the nobility, which, after the states of Normandy had been so severely taxed to support the expense of the English wars, was regarded as a national calamity. It was therefore a measure of great political expediency on the part of William, to re-appoint Matilda, for the third time, to the regency of Normandy. The name of his eldest son, Robert, was, as before, associated with that of Matilda in the regency; and at parting, the Conqueror entreated his spouse "to pray for the speedy termination of the English troubles, to encourage the arts of peace in Normandy, and to take care of the interests of their youthful heir."<sup>2</sup>

The latter injunction was somewhat superfluous; for Matilda's fondness for her first-born betrayed her into the most injudicious acts of partiality in his favour, and in all probability was the primary cause of the dissensions between him and his brothers, and the subsequent rupture between that wrong-headed prince and his royal father.

The death of the earl of Flanders, Matilda's father, and the unsettled state of her native country, owing to the strife between her brothers and nephews, who appeared bent on effecting the ruin of each other, and the fall of the ancient royal house of Flanders, greatly troubled her, and added in no slight degree to the feelings of anxiety and sorrow with which her return to Normandy was clouded, after the brief splendour of her residence in England as queen.<sup>3</sup>

The year 1069 was a season of peculiar misery in England.<sup>4</sup> The breaking up of the court at Winchester, and the departure of queen Matilda and her children for Normandy, cast a deep gloom on the aspect of William's affairs, while it was felt as a serious evil by the industrious classes, whose prosperity depended on the encouragement extended to their handiworks, by the demands of the rich and powerful, for those articles of adornment and luxury, in the fabrication of which many hands are profitably employed, employment being equivalent to wealth with those whose time, ingenuity, or strength, can be brought into the market in any tangible form. But where there is no custom, it is useless to tax the powers of the craftsman or artisan to produce articles which are no longer required. This was the case in England from the year 1069, when, the queen and ladies of the court having quitted the country, trade languished, employment ceased, and the horrors of civil war were aggravated by the distress of a starving population. The most peaceably disposed were goaded by their sufferings to desperation.

It was, according to most accounts, in this year that William, to prevent the people of the land from confederating together in nocturnal assemblies, for the purpose of discussing their grievances, and stimulat-

<sup>1</sup> Ordericus Vitalis. Henry Huntingdon.

<sup>2</sup> Ordericus Vitalis. Malmesbury.

<sup>3</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>4</sup> W. Poitou. Ordericus Vitalis. Saxon Chronicle.

ing each other to revolt, compelled them to *couvre feu*, or to extinguish the lights and fires in their dwellings, at eight o'clock every evening, at the tolling of a bell, called, from that circumstance, the curfew, or *couvre feu*.<sup>1</sup> Such, at any rate, has been the popular tradition of ages, and traces of the custom in many places still remain. The curfew has become so thoroughly identified with the institutions of William the Conqueror, that we doubt not it originated with him, especially as there is great reason to believe that he had previously resorted to the same measure, in his early career as duke of Normandy, to secure the better observance of his famous edict for the suppression of brawls and murders in his dominions, called emphatically "God's peace."<sup>2</sup>

When William took the field after Matilda's departure, and commenced one of his rapid marches towards York, where Waltheof had encouraged the Danish army to winter, he swore "by the splendour of God," his usual oath, that he would not leave one living soul in Northumberland. As soon as he entered Yorkshire, he began to execute his terrible threats of vengeance, laying the whole country waste with fire and sword. After he had bribed the Danish chief to withdraw, and the long defended city of York was surrendered at discretion by Waltheof, he won that powerful Saxon leader to his cause, by bestowing upon him in marriage his beautiful niece Judith.

These fatal nuptials were solemnized among the ruins of the vanquished city of York, where the Conqueror kept his Christmas, amidst the desolation he had wrought.<sup>3</sup>

Not to enter into the melancholy details of William's work of devastation in the north of England, which are so pathetically recorded by the Saxon Chronicle, we will close the brief annals of the direful years 1070 and 1071, with the death of earl Edwin, the affianced husband of one of the daughters of the Conqueror and Matilda. He was proceeding from Ely to Scotland, charged, as was supposed, with a secret mission from his disinherited countrymen to the king of Scots, when his route was betrayed by three brothers in whom he had rashly confided, and, after a valiant defence against a band of Normans, he was slain, with twenty of his followers. His death was passionately bewailed by the English, and even the stern nature of the Conqueror was melted into compassion, and he is said to have shed tears when the bleeding head of the young Saxon, with its long flowing hair, was presented to him by the traitors, who had beguiled him into the Norman ambush; and, instead of conferring the expected reward on the murderers, he condemned them to perpetual exile.<sup>4</sup>

A singular curiosity was turned up by the plough, 1694, in a field near Sutton, in the Isle of Ely, where Edwin and Morcar are said to have met. It is a small shield of silver, about six inches long. On it was a Saxon inscription, which has been found to express that it had the

<sup>1</sup> Speed. It was first established at Winchester. Cassan's *Lives of the Bishops of Winchester*. Polydore Vergil is the first chronicler who mentions the curfew.

<sup>2</sup> Ordericus Vitalis. The curfew is still tolled in some districts of Normandy, where it is called "*La Retraite*."—Ducarel.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew Paris.

<sup>4</sup> Ordericus Vitalis, p. 521.—J Brompton.

double property, of protecting the person who wore it, and the lover for whose sake it was worn. If it belonged to the young earl Edwin, it was perhaps a returned love-pledge from the betrothed princess.<sup>1</sup>

The Saxon bishops had stood forth as champions for the rights and ancient laws of the people; and William, finding it impossible to awe or silence these true patriots, proceeded to deprive them of their benefices, and to plunder the churches and monasteries without scruple; and, according to the report of Roger Wendover, and other ancient chroniclers, he appropriated to his own use all the chalices and rich shrines on which he could lay his hands.<sup>2</sup>

It was in vain for the English clergy to appeal to the Roman pontiff for protection; for William was supported by the authority of the new system of church government adopted by the Norman bishops, which was to deprive the people of the use of the Scriptures in the Saxon tongue; thereby rendering one of the best and noblest legacies bequeathed to them by that royal reformer, king Alfred,—the translation commenced by him of the Word of God,—a dead letter. It also became an understood thing, that no scholar, of English birth, was to be admitted to any degree of ecclesiastical preferment.<sup>3</sup>

The Norman language was at that time introduced, by royal authority, into all schools, colleges, and public foundations for the instruction of youth. The laws and statutes of the country were written in that language, and no other was permitted to be used in courts of justice, to the great perplexity and vexation of the people of the land, who were thus under the necessity of employing Norman advocates to plead for redress against the wrongs of Normans.<sup>4</sup>

The luckless Saxons were, of course, sure to obtain more law than justice in such cases, being for the most part wholly unconscious of the purport of the proceedings; so that unless they had the good fortune to

<sup>1</sup> Ingram, the learned translator of the Saxon Chronicle, has given this elegant translation of the inscription:—

“Edwinus me pignori dat;  
Illa, O Domine, Domine,  
Cum semper defendat,  
Quæ me ad pectus suum gestet,  
Nisi illa me alienaverit  
Sua sponte.”

“Edwin his pledge has left in me,  
Now to the battle prest;  
His guardian angel may *she* be,  
Who wears me on her breast.  
To him the true-hearted may she prove,  
O God, to thee I pray:

Edwin shall well requite her love,  
Returning from the fray.

But if, forgetful of her vows,  
(May Heaven avert the thought!)  
She sell this love-charm of her spouse  
Which never could be bought;—

If of her own free will she cast  
This talisman away;  
May Edwin's life no longer last,  
To rue that fatal day.”

As this talisman was found where earl Edwin fell, or, at least, where he was last heard of, circumstances seem to say, that *he* was in possession of it, and not the lady he loved, who had, in all probability, been forced to return it to him.

<sup>2</sup> Ingulphus. Malmsbury. Brompton.

<sup>3</sup> Ingulphus. Halket. Eadmer. Saxon Annals.

<sup>4</sup> Ingulphus. Halket. Polydore Vergil. Mills. Brady.

fall into the hands of *very* conscientious Norman pleaders, they were sacrificed to the superior interest of their opponents, and, for aught they could tell to the contrary, the advocates whom they had paid might have employed their eloquence on the contrary side, or, at the least, in betraying all the weaker points of their clients' causes.

It was the earnest desire of our Norman sovereigns to silence the Saxon tongue for ever, by substituting in its place the Norman dialect, which was a mixture of French and Danish.<sup>1</sup> It was, however, found to be a more easy thing to subjugate the land, than to suppress the natural language of the people. A change was all that could be effected, and that change was an amalgamation between the two languages, the Normans gradually acquiring as many of the Saxon words and idioms as the Anglo-Saxons were compelled to use of theirs. Latin was used by the learned as a general medium of communication, and thus became, in a slight degree, mingled with the parlance of the more refined portion of society. From these mingled elements our own copious and expressive language was in process of time formed.

One of the Conqueror's most difficult undertakings was the reduction of the Isle of Ely, which had been fortified with the most consummate military skill, by the Saxon patriot, Hereward, who was accounted one of the bravest champions and most accomplished leaders.

The unsettled state of England had the effect of dividing William from his beloved queen, and forced them for a considerable time to reign separately—he in England, and she in Normandy.

Matilda, meantime, who appears to have possessed no inconsiderable talents in the art of government, had conducted the regency of Normandy, during all the troubles in which her lord was involved, with great prudence and address. She had been placed in a position of peculiar difficulty, in consequence of the revolt of the province of Maine, and the combined hostilities of the king of France and the duke of Bretagne, who had taken advantage of the manner in which William was occupied with the Scotch invasion and the Saxon revolt, to attack his continental dominions; and Matilda was compelled to apply to her absent lord for succour. William immediately despatched the son of Fitz-Osborn to assist his fair regent in her military arrangements for the

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<sup>1</sup> While the Provençal language was yet in its infancy in the South of France, the Romance Walloon, or Latin, corrupted by German, was the dialect spoken in the North of France, and, with a further mixture of Norse, became the polite and poetical language of the ducal court of Normandy. It was called the *langue d'oïl*, or tongue of *oui*, from its affirmative. The appellation of Walloon was derived from the word Waalchland, the name by which the Germans to this day designate Italy. William the Conqueror was so much attached to the Romance Walloon, that he encouraged its literature among his subjects, and forced it on the English by means of rigorous enactments, in place of the ancient Saxon, which closely resembled the Norse of his own ancestors. It was from Normandy that the first poets in the French language sprang. A digest of the laws which William imposed on his English subjects, is the most ancient work existing in the Romance Walloon. Then the Book of Brut, a fabulous history of the Britons; next Wace's Romance de Rou, or History of Rollo; the word *romanes* meaning narrative, and not a fiction.

defence of Normandy, and expedited a peace with the king of Scotland, that he might the sooner come to her aid in person, with his veteran troops.

The Norman ladies were at that period extremely malcontent at the long-protracted absence of their lords.<sup>1</sup> The wife of Hugh Grantmesnil, the governor of Winchester, had caused them great uneasiness, by the reports which she had circulated of the infidelities of their husbands. These representations had induced the indignant dames to send peremptory messages, for the immediate return of their lords. In some instances the warlike Normans had yielded obedience to these conjugal mandates, and returned home, greatly to the prejudice of William's affairs in England. 'This was the aim of the lady of Grantmesnil, who had for some reason conceived a particular ill-will against her sovereign; and, not contented with doing everything in her power to incite his Norman subjects to revolt, she had thought proper to cast the most injurious aspersions on his character as a husband, and insinuated that he had made an attempt on her virtue.'<sup>2</sup>

Githa, the mother of Harold, eagerly caught at these reports, which she is said to have taken great pleasure in circulating. She communicated them to Sweno, king of Denmark, and added, that the reason why Merleswen, a Kentish noble of some importance, had joined the late revolt in England, was, because the Norman tyrant had dishonoured his fair niece, the daughter of one of the canons of Canterbury.<sup>3</sup> This tale, whether false or true, came in due course to Matilda's ears, and caused the first conjugal difference that had ever arisen between her and her lord. She was by no means of a temper to take any affront of the kind patiently, and it is said that she caused the unfortunate damsel to be put to death, with circumstances of great cruelty.<sup>4</sup> Hearne, in his notes to Robert of Gloucester, furnishes us with a curious sequel to this tale, extracted from a very ancient chronicle among the Cottonian MSS., which, after relating "that the priest's daughter was privily slain by a confidential servant of Matilda, the queen," adds, "that the Conqueror was so enraged at the barbarous revenge taken by his queen, that, on his return to Normandy, he beat her with his bridle so severely, that she soon after died." Now, it is certain Matilda lived full ten years after the period at which this matrimonial discipline is said to have been inflicted upon her by the strong arm of the Conqueror; and the worthy chronicler himself seems to regard that part of the tale as apocryphal, and merely relates it as one of the current reports of the day. We are willing to hope that the story altogether has originated from the scandalous reports of that malign busy-body of the eleventh century, the lady Grantmesnil; though at the same time it is to be feared, that the woman who was capable of inflicting such deadly vengeance on the

<sup>1</sup> Ordericus Vitalis. Malmsbury.

<sup>2</sup> Henderson. Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>3</sup> Henderson's Life of the Conqueror. It must be remembered that the marriages of the English clergy were allowed by the Anglo-Saxon Catholic Church till near a quarter of a century afterwards.

<sup>4</sup> She caused her to be hamstrung.—Rapin. Henderson says Matilda ordered her jaws to be slit.

unfortunate Saxon nobleman who had been the object of her earliest affections, would not have been very scrupulous in her dealings with a female whom she suspected of having rivalled her in her husband's regard. At this distance of time it is impossible, after most careful investigation, to speak with any certainty, as to the degree of credit which may be attached to this dark tale; but as it is recorded by several of the oldest chroniclers, it becomes a matter of duty in the biographers of Matilda of Flanders to relate it, and leave the readers to form their own conclusions.

William was attended, on his voyage to Normandy, by a great military retinue; many English as well as Norman troops accompanied him,<sup>1</sup> and performed good service for him, in the reduction of the rebel province of Maine. The king of France made a hasty retreat before the terror of his warlike neighbour's arms, and peace was quickly restored within the circle of William's continental dominions.

If any cause of anger or mistrust had occurred, during their long separation, to interrupt the conjugal happiness of Matilda and her husband, it was but a passing cloud, for historians all agree that they were living together in a state of the most affectionate union, during the year 1074, great part of which was spent by the Conqueror with his family in Normandy.<sup>2</sup> It was at this period that Edgar Atheling came to the court at Caen, to make a voluntary submission to the Norman sovereign, and to entreat his forgiveness for the several insurrections in which he had been engaged. The Conqueror freely accorded an amnesty, treated him with great kindness, and pensioned him with a daily allowance of a pound of silver,<sup>3</sup> in the hope that this amicable arrangement would secure his government in England from all future disturbances. He was mistaken: fresh troubles had already broken out in that quarter, but this time they proceeded from his own turbulent Norman chiefs; one of them, withal, was the son of his great favourite and trusty kinsman, Fitz-Osborn; who was defeated and taken prisoner<sup>4</sup> by the nobles and prelates of Worcester. The Danish fleet, which had vainly hovered on the coast, waiting for a signal to land troops to assist the conspirators, was fain to retreat without effecting its object. As for the great Saxon earl, Waltheof, who had been drawn into the plot, and betrayed by his Norman wife, Judith, to her uncle, the Conqueror, he was, after a long suspense, beheaded on a rising-ground, just without the gates of Winchester; being the first English nobleman who had died by the hand of a public executioner.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Malmesbury. Saxon Annals.

<sup>3</sup> Saxon Annals. Malmesbury. Brompton.

<sup>4</sup> Fitz-Osborn was a relation of his sovereign, and, before this act of contumacy, stood high in his favour. He was only punished with imprisonment, for his share in the conspiracy. After a time his royal master, as a token that he was disposed to pardon him, sent him a costly suit of clothes; but Fitz-Osborn, instead of tendering his grateful acknowledgments for this present, ordered a large fire to be made, and, in the presence of the messenger, burned the rich garments, one by one, with the most insolent expressions of contempt. William was very angry at the manner in which his unwonted graciousness was received by his vassal kinsman, but inflicted no severer punishment than a lengthened term of imprisonment.—Henderson.

<sup>5</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

William next pursued his Norman traitor, Ralph de Guader, to the continent, and besieged him in the city of Dol, where he had taken refuge. The young duke of Bretagne, Allan Fergeant, assisted also by the king of France, came with a powerful army to the succour of the besieged earl; and William was not only compelled to raise the siege, but to abandon his tents and baggage, to the value of fifteen thousand pounds. His diplomatic talents, however, enabled him to extricate himself from the embarrassing strait in which he had placed himself; and a pacific treaty was entered into, between him and the valiant young duke of Bretagne, the conclusion of which was a marriage between Alan and his daughter Constance. This alliance was no less advantageous to the princely bridegroom, than agreeable to William and Matilda. The nuptials were celebrated with great pomp, and the bride was dowered with all the lands of Chester, once the possessions of the unfortunate earl Edwin, who had formerly been contracted to one of her sisters.<sup>1</sup>

At the close of this year died Editha, the widow of Edward the Confessor. She had retired to a convent, but was treated with the respect and honour of a queen-dowager, and was buried by the side of her royal husband, in Westminster Abbey. She was long survived by her unfortunate sister-in-law, Almath, the widow of Harold, the other Saxon queen-dowager, who, having had woful experience of the calamities of greatness, and the vanity of earthly distinctions, voluntarily resigned her royal title, and passed the residue of her days in obscurity.

In the year 1075, William and Matilda, with their family, kept the festival of Easter with great pomp, at Fescamp, and attended in person the profession of their eldest daughter Cicely, who was there veiled a nun, by the archbishop John.<sup>2</sup> "This royal maid," says Ordericus Vitalis, "had been educated with great care, in the convent of Caen, where she was instructed in all the learning of the age, and several sciences. She was consecrated to the holy and indivisible Trinity, and took the veil under the venerable abbess Matilda, and faithfully conformed to all the rules of conventual discipline. Cicely succeeded this abbess in her office, having, for fourteen years, maintained the highest reputation for sanctity and wisdom. From the moment that she was dedicated to God by her father, she became a true servant of the Most High, and continued a pure and holy virgin, attending to the pious rules of her order, for a period of fifty-two years."

Soon after the profession of the lady Cicely, those fatal divisions began to appear in the royal family, of which Matilda is accused of having sown the seeds, by the injurious partiality which she had shown for Robert, her first-born.

This prince, having been associated with his royal mother, in the regency of Normandy, from the age of fourteen, had been brought more into public than was perhaps desirable, at a period of life when presumptuous ideas of self-importance are only too apt to inflate the mind. Robert, during his father's long absence, was not only emancipated from all control, but had accustomed himself to exercise the functions of a sove-

<sup>1</sup> Saxon Annals. S. Dunelm. Malmsbury.

<sup>2</sup> Ordericus Vitalis. Malmsbury

reign, in Normandy, by anticipation, and to receive the homage and flattery of all ranks of people, in the dominions to which he was the heir. The Conqueror, it seems, had promised that he would one day bestow the duchy of Normandy on him; and Robert, having represented the ducal majesty for nearly eight years, considered himself an injured person when his royal father took the power into his own hands once more, and exacted from him the obedience of a subject, and the duty of a son.<sup>1</sup> There was also a jealous rivalry between Robert and his two younger brothers, William Rufus and Henry. William Rufus, notwithstanding his rude, boisterous manners, and the apparent recklessness of his disposition, had an abundant share of world-craft, and well knew how to adapt himself to his father's humour, so that he was no less a favourite with the Conqueror than Robert was with Matilda. Robert was a prince of a generous disposition, but of an irritable temperament, proud, and quick to take offence. From his low stature his father had bestowed on him the cognomen of Court-hose,<sup>2</sup> and this appellation, like all names derived from some personal peculiarity, was, no doubt, very displeasing to a haughty young man, and tended in no slight degree to increase the mortification attendant on the loss of power, and to create feelings of ill-will against his royal sire. He had, withal, many injurious flatterers and pretended friends, among the dissipated young nobles of Normandy, who took every occasion to persuade him that he was an injured person, especially with regard to the province of Maine. Robert had in his infancy been espoused to Margaret, the heiress of Herbert, the last earl of that province. The little countess died while they were yet children, and William of Normandy, who had, during her minority, taken her lands under his wardship, annexed them to his own dominions after her death. When the juvenile widower became of age, he considered himself entitled to the earldom and lands of Maine, in right of his deceased wife, and claimed them of his father, who put him off with fair words, but withheld the territory, though the people of Maine demanded Robert for their lord; and at the surrender of the revolted city of Mans, it was among the articles of capitulation, that he should receive the investiture of the earldom. This condition was violated by the Conqueror, who had no mind to part with any portion of his acquisitions during his life; verifying, in this as in every other action, the predictions of the gossips at his birth, "that he would grasp everything within his reach, and that which he had once grasped he would keep."<sup>3</sup>

In the year 1076, while Matilda and William were with their family, at the castle of L'Aigle, their two younger sons, William and Henry, in wanton play, threw some dirty water from the balcony of an upper apartment, on Robert and some of his partisans, who were walking in the court below. The fiery heir of Normandy construed this act of boyish folly into an act of studied contempt; and being just then in an irritable and excited frame of mind, he drew his sword, and rushed up stairs, with a threat of taking deadly vengeance on the youthful transgressors who had offered this insult to him before the whole court.

<sup>1</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.<sup>2</sup> Robert of Gloucester.<sup>3</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.



This occasioned a prodigious tumult and uproar in the castle, and nothing but the presence and stern authority of the king, who, hearing the alarm, burst into the room with his drawn sword in his hand, could have prevented fatal consequences.<sup>1</sup>

Robert, not obtaining the satisfaction he expected, for the affront he had received, privately retired from the court that very evening, followed by a party of the young nobility whom he had attached to his cause.<sup>2</sup>

Richard, the second son of William and Matilda, does not appear to have taken any part in these quarrels. He was the pupil of the learned Lanfranc, and was probably occupied with studious pursuits, as he is said to have been a prince of great promise, and of an amiable disposition.<sup>3</sup> He died in England, in the flower of his youth. According to popular tradition, he was gored by a stag, while hunting in the New Forest, which caused his death; but some historians record that he died of a fever, occasioned by the malaria in the depopulated district of Hampshire, at the time when so many thousands of the unfortunate Saxons perished by famine, in consequence of having been driven from their homes, when the Conqueror converted that once fertile part of England into a chase, for the enjoyment of his favourite amusement of hunting.

Prince Richard was buried in Winchester Cathedral: a slab of stone marked with his name is still seen there.

Drayton gives a political reason for the depopulation of the shore of Hampshire, occasioned by the enclosure of the New Forest, which is well worth the consideration of the historical reader.

"Clear Avon, coming in, her sister Stour doth call,  
And at New Forest's foot into the sea doth fall;  
That Forest now, whose sight e'en boundless seems to lie,  
Its being erst received from William's tyranny,  
Who framed laws to keep those beasts he planted then,  
His lawless will from hence before had driven men:  
That where the earth was warmed with Winter's festal fires,  
The melancholic hare now forms in tangled brakes and briers;  
And on sites of churches, grown with nettles, fern, and weeds,  
Stands now the aged ranpick trunk, where ploughmen cast their seeds.  
The people were, by William here, cut off from every trade:  
That on this spot the Norman still might enter to invade,  
And, on this desolated place and unfrequented shore,  
New forces evermore might land to aid those here before."

The Saxon Chronicle comments on the oppressive statutes enacted by the Norman Conqueror, for the preservation of game, in an eloquent strain of indignant irony, and says, "he loved the tall deer as if he had been their father."

That game-laws were in existence at a much earlier period, is most certain; but it was during this reign that they were rendered a grievance to the people, and assumed the character of a moral wrong in the legislature of the country. The more enlightened policy of modern jurisprudence, has in some degree ameliorated the rigorous penalties enacted by our Norman line of sovereigns, against poaching in its various de-

<sup>1</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>2</sup> Malmsbury.

<sup>3</sup> Camden. Saxon Chronicle.

partments; but the bitterness engendered by the spirit of those laws remains in full force, in the hearts of those classes against whom the statutes are supposed to point, and is constantly acted upon by persons assuming the office of political agitators, for the purpose of creating divisions between the people and their rulers.

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## MATILDA OF FLANDERS,

QUEEN OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

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### CHAPTER III.

Matilda mediates between her husband and son—Robert's insolence and rebellion—Matilda supplies him with money—Conqueror seizes Matilda's agent—Conqueror's remonstrance—Queen's answer—Robert's military prowess—Field of Archembraye—Robert wounds the Conqueror—His penitence—Matilda intercedes—Conqueror writes to his son—Robert pardoned—Conqueror's legislation in England—Domesday Book—Royal revenue—Queen of England's perquisites and privileges—Her dues at Queenhithe—Officers of royal household—Matilda's court the model of succeeding ones—She continues to govern Normandy—Her visit to the monastery of Ouche—Illness and death of her second daughter—Fresh cause of sorrow to the queen—Robert's dissensions with his father—Matilda's distress—Applies to a hermit—His vision, and message to the queen—Her grief and lingering illness—Dying of a broken heart—The Conqueror hastens from England—She dies—Her obsequies—her alms—Tomb—Epitaph—Will—Articles of dress named therein—Portrait and costume—Her children—The Conqueror's deep affliction—Disquiets after the death of the queen—Fatal accident to the Conqueror—Death—His body plundered—Accidents and interruptions at his funeral—Monument—Portrait—Destruction of his tomb—Of Matilda's tomb—Her sapphire ring—Their bodies re-interred—Matilda's tomb restored—Final destruction at French Revolution.

THE feud between her royal husband and her first-born was very painful to Matilda, whose anxious attempts to effect a reconciliation were unavailing. When Robert's passion was somewhat cooled, he consented to see his father, but the interview was anything but friendly. Ordericus Vitalis gives the following particulars of the conference.

Robert assumed a very high tone, and repeated his demand, of being invested with the duchies of Normandy and Maine. This was of course refused by the Conqueror, who sternly bade his ambitious heir "remember the fate of Absalom, and the misfortunes of Rehoboam, and not to listen to the evil counsellors who wished to seduce him from the paths of duty." On which Robert insolently replied, "That he did not come there to listen to sermons, with which he had been nauseated by his tutors when he was learning grammar, but to claim the investiture which had been promised to him. Answer me positively," continued

he, "are not these things my right? Have you not promised to bestow them on me?"<sup>1</sup>

"It is not my custom to strip till I go to bed," replied the Conqueror; "and as long as I live, I will not deprive myself of my native realm, Normandy, neither will I divide with another; for it is written in the holy evangelists, 'Every kingdom that is divided against itself shall become desolate.'<sup>2</sup> I won England by mine own good sword; the vicars of Christ placed the diadem of its ancient kings on my brow, and the sceptre in mine hand; and I swear that all the world combined shall not compel me to delegate my power to another. It is not to be borne, that he who owes his existence to me should aspire to be my rival in mine own dominions."

But Robert scornfully rejoined, with equal pride and disrespect, "If it be inconvenient for you to keep your word, I will withdraw from Normandy, and seek justice from strangers; for here I will not remain as a subject."<sup>3</sup>

With these words he quitted the royal presence, and, with a party of disaffected nobles, took refuge with Matilda's brother, Robert earl of Flanders, surnamed *Le Frison*, from his having married the countess of Friesland.

From this uncle, Robert received very bad advice, and the king of France endeavoured, by all the means in his power, to widen the breach between the undutiful heir of Normandy and his father. Encouraged by these evil counsellors, Robert busied himself in fomenting discontents, and organizing a formidable faction, in his father's dominions, whence he drew large sums, in the shape of presents and loans, from many of the vassals of the ducal crown, who were willing to ingratiate themselves with the heir apparent, and to conciliate the favour of the queen-duchess, whose partial fondness for her eldest son was well known.

The supplies thus obtained Robert improvidently lavished among his dissolute companions, both male and female. In consequence of this extravagance, he was occasionally reduced to the greatest inconvenience. When under the pressure of those pecuniary embarrassments, which could not fail to expose him to the contempt of the foreign princes who espoused his quarrel against his father, he was wont to apply to his too indulgent mother, Matilda, by whom he was so passionately beloved, that she could refuse him nothing; from her private coffers she secretly supplied him with large sums of silver and gold; and when these resources were exhausted by the increasing demands of her prodigal son, Matilda had the weakness to strip herself of her jewels and precious garments, for the same purpose.<sup>4</sup>

This system continued even when Robert had taken up arms against his father and sovereign. Roger de Beaumont, that faithful minister — whom William had, previous to his first embarkation on the memorable expedition from St. Vallerie, appointed as the premier of Normandy, —

<sup>1</sup> Ordericus Vitalis. Hemingford. Walsingham.

<sup>2</sup> Ordericus Vitalis. S. Dunelm. P. Daniel.

<sup>3</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>4</sup> Malmsbury. Ordericus Vitalis.

and who had ever since assisted his royal mistress, not only with his counsels in the administration of affairs of state, but even in the education of her children, felt it his duty to inform his sovereign of the under-hand proceedings of Matilda in favour of her rebel son.<sup>1</sup>

William was in England when the startling intelligence reached him, of the unnatural rebellion of his first-born, and the treachery of his beloved consort, in whom he had ever reposed the most unbounded confidence. He appears scarcely to have given credence to the representations of Roger de Beaumont, relating to the conduct of his queen, till, on his return to Normandy, he intercepted one of Matilda's private agents, named Sampson, who was charged with communications from the queen to Robert, which left no doubt on William's mind, of the identity of the secret friend by whom his undutiful son had been supplied with the means of carrying on his plots and hostile measures against his government.<sup>2</sup>

There was a stern grandeur, not unmingled with tenderness, in the reproof which he addressed to his offending consort on this occasion.

"The observation of a certain philosopher is true," said he, "and I have only too much cause to admit the force of his words—

*'Naufragium rerum est mulier malefida marito:'*

"The woman who deceives her husband is the destruction of her own house."

"Where in all the world could you have found a companion so faithful and devoted in his affection?" continued he, passionately. "Behold my wife, she whom I have loved as my own soul, to whom I have confided the government of my realms, my treasure, and all that I possessed in the world, of power and greatness—she hath supported mine adversary against me—she hath strengthened and enriched him from the wealth which I confided to her keeping—she hath secretly employed her zeal and subtlety in his cause, and done everything she could to encourage him against me!"<sup>3</sup>

Matilda's reply to this indignant but touching appeal, which her royal husband, more, it should appear, in sorrow than in anger, addressed to her, is no less remarkable for its impassioned eloquence, than the subtlety with which she evades the principal point on which she is pressed, and entrenches herself on the strong ground of maternal love.

"My lord," said she, "I pray you not to be surprised if I feel a mother's tenderness for my first-born son. By the virtue of the Most High, I protest that if my son Robert were dead, and hidden far from the sight of the living, seven feet deep in the earth, and that the price of my blood could restore him to life, I would cheerfully bid it flow. For his sake I would endure any suffering, yea, things from which, on any other occasion, the feebleness of my sex would shrink with terror. How then can you suppose that I could enjoy the pomp and luxuries with which I was surrounded, when I knew that he was pining in want and misery? Far from my heart be such hardness, nor ought your authority to impose such insensibility on a mother."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Malmesbury.

<sup>2</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

William is reported to have turned pale with anger at this rejoinder. It was not, however, on Matilda, the object of his adoring and constant affection, that he prepared to inflict the measure of vengeance which her transgression against him had provoked. Sampson, the comparatively innocent agent whom she had employed in this transaction, was doomed to pay the dreadful penalty of the offence, with the loss of sight, by the order of his enraged sovereign.<sup>1</sup> In such cases it is usual for the instrument to be the sacrifice, and persons of the kind are generally yielded up, as a sort of scapegoat, or expiatory victim. But Matilda did not abandon her terrified agent in his distress; she contrived to convey a hasty intimation of his peril, and her desire of preserving him, to some of the persons who were devoted to her service; and Sampson, more fortunate than his illustrious namesake of yore, was enabled to escape the cruel sentence of his lord, by taking sanctuary in the monastery of Ouche, of which Matilda was a munificent patroness. Nevertheless, as it was a serious thing to oppose the wrath of such a prince as William, the abbot Manier found no other way of securing the trembling fugitive from his vengeance, than that of causing him to be shorn, shaven, and professed a monk of Ouche, the same day he entered the convent, "in happy hour both for his body and soul," observes the contemporary chronicler who relates this circumstance.<sup>2</sup>

It does not appear that William's affection for Matilda suffered any material diminution in consequence of these transactions, neither would he permit any one to censure her conduct in his presence.<sup>3</sup> She was the love of his youth, the solace of his meridian hours of life, and she preserved her empire over his mighty heart to the last hour of her life. But though the attachment of the Conqueror to his consort remained unaltered, the happiness of the royal pair was materially impaired. Robert, their first-born, was in arms against his father and sovereign, and at the head of a numerous army, supported by the hostile power of France on the one hand, and the disaffected portion of William's subjects on the other. He had made a formidable attack on Rouen, and in several instances obtained successes which at first astonished his indignant parent, who had certainly greatly underrated the military talents of his heir.

When, however, the Conqueror perceived that the filial foe who had thus audaciously displayed his rebel banner against him, had inherited all the martial prowess of his race, and was by no means unlikely to prove a match for himself in the art of war, he arrayed a mighty army, and advanced with all his wonted energy, to give him battle, not doubting but that success would, as usual, attend his arms. The royal chiefs of Normandy met in hostile encounter, on the plain of Archembraye, near the castle of Gerberg. William Rufus, the Conqueror's favourite son, was in close attendance on his father's person that day. This prince had already received the honour of knighthood from Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, his tutor, and he was eager to assist in humbling

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<sup>1</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

the pride of his elder brother, over whom the Conqueror anticipated a signal triumph.<sup>1</sup>

The battle was fought with no common fury on both sides; but Robert, who headed a choice body of cavalry, decided the fortune of the day, by his impetuous charge upon the rearward of his foes, where his royal father commanded, whose utmost endeavours to preserve order in his ranks were ineffectual. It was in this charge that the memorable personal encounter between the Conqueror and his rebel son occurred, where Robert, unconscious who the doughty champion was against whom he tilted, ran his father through the arm with his lance, and unhorsed him.<sup>2</sup> This was the first time that William had ever been overcome in single combat, for he was one of the strongest men, and most approved knights, of the age in which he lived; and it is a singular fact, that in all the battles in which he had been engaged, he had never lost a drop of blood, till it was in this field drawn by the lance of his first-born. He was on this occasion in great danger of being slain in the *mêlée*; but transported with rage at the smart of his wound, and the disgrace of the overthrow, he called so loudly and angrily for rescue, that Robert recognised him, either by his voice or some of his favourite expletives, and hastily alighting, raised him from the ground in his arms, with much tenderness and respect, expressed the deepest concern at the unintentional crime of which he had been guilty, for which he most humbly entreated his forgiveness, and then placing him on his own horse, he brought him safely out of the press.<sup>3</sup> According to some of the historians of that period, William, instead of meeting this generous burst of feeling, on the part of his penitent son, with answering emotions of paternal tenderness, was so infuriated at the humiliation he had received, that he uttered a malediction against him, which all the after submissions of Robert could not induce him to retract; while others, equally deserving of credit, assert that he was so moved with the proof of Robert's dutiful reverence for his person, and the anxiety he had manifested for his safety, that he presently forgave him, and ever after held him in better respect. Both accounts may be true in part; for it is very possible, that when the Conqueror of England found himself defeated by his rebel subjects, on his native soil, and his hitherto invincible arm overcome by the prowess of his son, (whose person he had hitherto been accustomed to mention with a contemptuous allusion to his inferiority in stature,) he might, while the smart of his wound lasted, have indulged in a strong ebullition of wrathful reproach, not unmingled with execrations, of which it appears that he, in common with all Normans of that era, had an evil habit. But after his passion was abated, it is certain that he did, in compliance with the entreaties of his queen, consent to receive the submission of his victorious but penitent son.<sup>4</sup>

In this battle, William Rufus was severely wounded, as well as his father, and there was a considerable slaughter of the English troops, of which the Conqueror's army was chiefly composed; for Robert had

<sup>1</sup> Hoveden. S. Dunelm. M. Paris. Polydore Vergil.

<sup>2</sup> S. Dunelm. Malmsbury. Hoveden. M. Paris.

<sup>3</sup> S. Dunelm. M. Paris.

<sup>4</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

stolen the hearts of the Normans, while associated in the regency with his mother Matilda, and his father considered it unsafe to oppose him with his native troops. As it was, Robert remained the master of the field, having that day given indubitable proofs of able generalship, and great personal valour; but the perilous chance that had nearly rendered him the murderer of his father, made so deep an impression on his mind, that he remained for a time conscience-stricken, which caused him to endeavour, by employing the intercession of his doting mother, to obtain a reconciliation with his offended sire.<sup>1</sup>

Matilda had suffered greatly in mind, during the unnatural warfare between her husband and her first-born, especially after the frightful circumstance of their personal encounter in the field of Archembraye, which was fought in the year 1077. Some feelings of self-reproach might possibly mingle with her uneasiness on this occasion.

Her health began to decline, and William was at length moved by her incessant pleading, and the sight of her tears, to write a letter with his own hand to Robert, inviting him "to repair to Rouen, and receive a full pardon for his late rebellion, promising at the same time to grant him everything that he could expect from the affection of a father, consistently with the duty of a king." On the receipt of this welcome letter, Robert delayed not a moment to obey the summons. He came to Rouen, attended only by three servants; he was received by his parents in the most affectionate manner; and a temporary reconciliation was effected between him and his brethren.<sup>2</sup>

Matilda did not long enjoy the society of this beloved son; for the Conqueror's affairs in England requiring his presence, he thought proper to carry Robert with him, under the pretence that he required his services in a military capacity, to defend the northern counties against the aggression of Malcolm, king of Scotland, who had once more violated the treaty of peace.

William's real motive for making Robert the companion of his voyage, was because he considered Matilda was too much devoted to the interest of her first-born, to render it expedient for him to remain with her in Normandy.

The following spring, Robert was commissioned to chastise the Scottish monarch; but having been given an ineffectual force, he performed nothing remarkable in that campaign. While in the north, he founded the town of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in the same place where Monkchester, or the city of the monks, was situated.<sup>3</sup>

The year 1078<sup>4</sup> was remarkable, in this country, for the great national survey, which was instituted by the Conqueror, for the purpose of ascertaining the precise nature of the lands and tangible property throughout England; so that, says Ingulphus, "there was not a hide of land, water, or waste, but he knew the valuation, the owners and possessors, together

<sup>1</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>2</sup> Ordericus Vitalis. Henderson.

<sup>3</sup> Henry Huntingdon. M. Westminster.

<sup>4</sup> According to some historians, the survey was not generally begun till 1080. It was not fully completed till 1086.—Tindal's Notes on Rapin.

with the rents and profits thereof; as also of all cities, towns, villages, hamlets, monasteries, and religious houses; causing, also, all the people in England to be numbered, their names to be taken, with notice what any one might *dispend* by the year; their substance, money, and bondmen recorded, with their cattle, and what service they owed to him, who held of him in fee; all which was certified upon the oaths of commissioners.”<sup>1</sup>

Such is the account given by the learned abbot of Croydon, of the particulars of William’s “Great Terrar,” or “Domesday-book,” as it was called by the Saxons. The proceedings of the commissioners were inquisitorial enough, no doubt, since they extended to ascertaining how much money every man had in his house, and what was owing to him. That in some instances, too, they were partial in their returns, is evident, by the acknowledgment of Ingulphus, when, speaking of his own monastery of Croyland, he says, “the commissioners were so kind and civil, that they did not give in the true value of it:” we may therefore conclude that, whenever the proprietors made it worth their while, they were equally obliging elsewhere. Yet it was at the risk of severe punishment that any fraud, favour, connivance, or concealment, was practised, by either the owners of the property, or the commissioners.<sup>2</sup> Robert of Gloucester, in his rhyming chronicle, gives the following quaint description of the Domesday-book.

“Then King William, to learn the worth of his land,  
Let enquiry stretch throughout all England,  
How many plough land, and hiden also,  
Were in every shire, and what they were worth thereto;  
And the rents of each town, and the waters each one,  
The worth, and woods eke, and wastes where lived none;  
By that he wist what he were worth of all England,  
And set it clearly forth that all might understand,  
And had it clearly written, and that *script* he put, I wis,  
In the treasure of Westminster, where it still is.”

The king’s great object in instituting this survey, was to form an exact calculation of his own revenues, and especially how much money he might be enabled to realize in the way of a land-tax. Accordingly, he laid an impost of six shillings on every hide of land<sup>3</sup> throughout England as soon as he had ascertained this point; which tax affected the Normans, who had become, generally speaking, the lords of the soil, far more than it did the English, who were for the most part reduced to abject poverty.

The description or survey of England was written in two books, the Great and Little Domesday-book,<sup>4</sup> and when finished, they were carefully laid up in the king’s treasury or exchequer, to be consulted on occasion,

<sup>1</sup> Ingulphus.

<sup>2</sup> This survey was made by presentment of juries, that is, certain persons who were appointed from every hundred, wapentake, or county, and sworn in before commissioners, consisting of the greatest earls, bishops, or leading persons in the district.—Brady.

<sup>3</sup> This was called Hydage.

The little book contains only Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex.



or as Polydore Vergil shrewdly observes, "when it was required to know of how much more wool the English flocks might be fleeced."

By the aid of this survey, William was enabled to raise the royal revenue to the sum of four hundred thousand pounds per year, which is computed by Brady to be upwards of five millions of our present money. In addition to this settled income, he was entitled to many perquisites, as mulcts, fines, forfeitures, licences for buying and selling, for granting leave to marry, and many other profitable contingencies, which were in those days constantly bringing supplies into the royal purse. Then there were certain occasions on which subsidies were granted, as a matter of course, as on the marriage of an eldest daughter, or when knighthood was conferred on a son.

Matilda, though residing chiefly in Normandy, had her distinct revenues, perquisites, and privileges, as queen of England. She was allowed to claim her *aurum reginæ*, or queen-gold; that is, the tenth part of every fine voluntary that was paid to the crown.<sup>1</sup> She received, from the city of London, sums to furnish oil for her lamp, wood for her hearth, and tolls or imposts on goods landed at Queenhithe; with many other immunities, which the queen-consorts in latter days have not ventured to claim.

The table at which the queen herself sat was furnished with viands, at the daily expenditure of forty shillings. Twelve pence each was allowed for the sustenance of her hundred attendants.<sup>2</sup>

The royal revenues were never richer than in this reign, and they were not charged with any of the expenses attending on the maintenance of the military force of the country, for the king had taken care to impose that burden on such persons, among his followers, who had been enriched with the forfeited lands of the Anglo-Saxons. Almost every landed proprietor then held his estates on the tenure of performing crown service, and furnishing a quota of men-at-arms, at the king's need or pleasure. In this reign the Court of Exchequer was instituted, so called from the chequered cloth, figured like a chess-board, that was laid on the table when the court was sitting.<sup>3</sup>

The principal or supreme court of judicature in ordinary was called *curia regis*,<sup>4</sup> or King's Court, which was always at the royal residence. There councils were held, and all affairs of state transacted. There the throne was placed, which was an ordinary court of judicature,<sup>5</sup> where justice was administered to the subjects by the king, as chief magistrate. The chief officers of this court were:—1st. The grand justiciary: he was next to the king in power and authority, and in his absence governed the realm as viceroy: if the king were not present in person in *curia regis*, he acted as chief judge, both in criminal and civil causes. 2d. The constable: he was a high officer, both in peace and war; this office was anciently hereditary. 3d. The mareschal: this office is still here-

<sup>1</sup> Prynn's "*Aurum Reginæ*."

<sup>2</sup> The household book of Edward IV. called the "*Black Book*," which cites precedents from extreme antiquity.

<sup>3</sup> Madox's *History of the Exchequer*.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

ditary, and is at present exercised by his grace the duke of Norfolk. The office of the mareschal, or earl marshal, was to provide for the security of the royal person, in the palace, to distribute lodgings there, (not always the most enviable task in those bellicose days,) and to preserve peace and order in the king's household. How the latter duty was performed when the mareschal chanced to be himself one of the most quarrelsome persons in the court, as in the case of Bigod earl of Norfolk, our authority saith not. It was also the business of the earl marshal to assist in determining all controversies: there is a notable one on record, that took place between king Edward the First and his mareschal, the said Bigod, which we shall relate, among the events of that reign.

The 4th great officer of the King's Court was the seneschal or steward of the palace, called the dapifer. The 5th was the chamberlain, who presided over all matters of courtly ceremonial. The 6th was the king's chancellor, generally some famous ecclesiastic. The chancellor was the king's prime counsellor, and was accustomed to supervise the charters to be sealed with the king's seal; and likewise to supervise and seal the acts and precepts that issued in proceedings from *curia regis*, or the king's court.

The 7th officer was the king's treasurer, and he was also most frequently a prelate or noted churchman. Besides these, there were *le boteler*, or the king's butler, who presided over the royal cellars, and served the wine-cup to the sovereign; the sewer, whose business it was to place the dishes on the royal table; and many other officers, of inferior reckoning in the household, but who were nevertheless nobles or knights.

We have been thus minute in our particulars of the first Anglo-Norman court, because, although it was little graced by the presence of the queen, its arrangements formed the model and precedent for those in the succeeding reigns, and cast no little light on the habits and customs of royalty in the middle ages of English history.

We must now return to the personal history of Matilda. The latter years of this queen were spent in Normandy, where she continued to exercise the functions of government, for her royal husband.<sup>1</sup>

Ordericus Vitalis relates the particulars of a visit which she paid to the monastery of Ouche, to entreat the prayers of the abbot Manier, and his monks, in behalf of her second daughter, the lady Constance, the wife of Alan Fergeant, duke of Bretagne. This princess, who was passionately desirous of bringing an heir to Bretagne, was childless, and to the grief of her mother, had fallen into a declining state of health. Matilda, in the hope of averting the apprehended death of the youthful duchess, sought the shrine of St. Eurole, the patron of the monks of Ouche, with prayers and offerings. She was most honourably received by the learned abbot Manier, and his monks, who conducted her into the church. She offered a mark of gold on the altar there, and presented to the shrine of St. Eurole a costly ornament, adorned with precious stones, and she vowed many benefits in reversion, if the saint were pro-

<sup>1</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

pitious. After this the queen-duchess dined in the common refectory, behaving at the same time with the most edifying humility, so as to leave an agreeable remembrance of her visit, on the minds of the brethren, of whom the worthy chronicler (who relates this circumstance, to the honour and glory of his convent) was one.<sup>1</sup>

Matilda found that her visit and offerings to the shrine of St. Euseb were unavailing, to prolong the life of her daughter, for the duchess Constance died in the flower of her age, after an unfruitful marriage of seven years. Her remains were conveyed to England, and interred in the abbey of St. Edmund's Bury. Like all the children of William and Matilda, she had been carefully educated, and is said to have been a princess possessed of great mental acquirements. After her death, Alan duke of Bretagne married again, and had a family by his second wife; but the rich grant of English lands, with which the Conqueror had dowered his daughter Constance, he was permitted to retain, together with the title of earl of Richmond, which was long borne by the dukes of Bretagne, his successors.

The grief which the early death of her daughter caused Matilda, was soon succeeded by feelings of a still more painful nature, the result of a fresh difference between her royal husband and her beloved son Robert. Some historians<sup>2</sup> assert that this was occasioned by the refusal of the prince to marry the young and lovely heiress of Earl Waltheof, which greatly displeased his father, who was desirous of conciliating his English subjects by such an alliance, and, at the same time, of making some atonement for the murder of the unfortunate Saxon chief, which always appears to have been a painful subject of reflection to him.

About this time, Matilda, hearing that a German hermit, of great sanctity, was possessed of the gift of prophecy, sent to entreat his prayers for her jarring son and husband, and requested his opinion on the subject of their dissension.<sup>3</sup>

The hermit gave a very affectionate reception to the envoys of the queen, but demanded three days before he delivered his reply to her questions. On the third day he sent for the messengers, and gave his answer, in the following strain of oracular allegory. "Return to your mistress," said he, "and tell her I have prayed to God in her behalf, and

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<sup>1</sup> Ordericus Vitalis, the most eloquent of all the historians of that period, and the most minute and faithful in his personal records of the Conqueror, his queen, and family, was, nevertheless, born in England, and of Anglo-Saxon parentage. He was ten years old at the epoch of the Norman invasion, when for better security he was, to use his own language, "conveyed with weeping eyes from his native country, to be educated in Normandy, at the convent of Ouche," which finally became so dear to him, that all the affections of his heart appear to have been centred within its bounds. In his chronicle of the Norman sovereigns, he sometimes makes digressions of a hundred pages, to descant on St. Euseb, and the merits of the brethren of Ouche.

<sup>2</sup> Henderson, in his *Life of the Conqueror*, states that Robert was much taken with the beauty of the young Saxon lady; but that his regard was by no means of an honourable nature, and his conduct to her displeased the Conqueror so much, that, to punish his son for insults offered to his beautiful ward, he forbade him the court.

<sup>3</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

the Most High has made known to me in a dream the things she desires to learn. I saw in my vision a beautiful pasture, covered with grass and flowers, and a noble charger feeding therein. A numerous herd gathered round about, eager to enter and share the feast, but the fiery charger would not permit them to approach near enough to crop the flowers and herbage.

“But, alas! the majestic steed, in the midst of his pride and courage, died, his terror departed with him, and a poor silly steer appeared in his place, as the guardian of the pasture. Then the throng of meaner animals, who had hitherto feared to approach, rushed in, and trampled the flowers and grass beneath their feet, and that which they could not devour they defiled and destroyed.<sup>1</sup>

“I will explain the mystery couched in this parable. The steed is William of Normandy, the Conqueror of England, who, by his wisdom, courage, and power, keeps the surrounding foes of Normandy in awe. Robert is the dull, inactive beast who will succeed him; and then those baser sort of animals, the envious princes, who have long watched for the opportunity of attacking this fair, fruitful pasture, Normandy, will overrun the land, and destroy all the prosperity which its present sovereign has established. Illustrious lady, if, after hearing the words of the vision, in which the Lord has vouchsafed to reply to my prayers, you do not labour to restore the peace of Normandy, you will henceforth behold nothing but misery, the death of your royal spouse, the ruin of all your race, and the desolation of your beloved country.”<sup>2</sup>

This clever apologue, in which some sagacious advice was implied, Matilda took for a prediction; and this idea, together with the increasing dissensions in her family, pressed heavily on her mind, and are supposed to have occasioned the lingering illness which slowly but surely conducted her to the tomb.

This illness was attended with great depression of spirits. She endeavoured to obtain comfort, by redoubling her devotional exercises and alms. She confessed her sins frequently, and with bitter tears.<sup>3</sup> It is to be hoped that a feeling of true penitence was mingled with the affliction of the queen, who, at the highest pinnacle of earthly grandeur, afforded a melancholy exemplification of the vanity and insufficiency of the envied distinctions with which she was surrounded, and was dying of a broken heart.

As soon as William, who was in England, was informed of the danger of his beloved consort, he hastily embarked for Normandy, and arrived at Caen in time to receive her last farewell.<sup>4</sup>

After Matilda had received the consolations of religion, she expired on the 2d of November, or, according to some historians, the 3d of that month, anno 1083, in the fifty-second year of her age, having borne the title of queen of England seventeen years, and duchess of Normandy upwards of thirty-one.

Her body was carried to the convent of the Holy Trinity at Caen,

<sup>1</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Malmesbury. Hoveden. Ingulphus. Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>4</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

which she had built and munificently endowed. The corpse of the queen-duchess was reverentially received, at the portal of the church, by a numerous procession of bishops and abbots, conducted within the choir, and deposited before the high altar. Her obsequies were celebrated with great pomp and solemnity, by the monks and clerks, and attended by a vast concourse of the poor, to whom she had been throughout life a generous benefactress; "and frequently," says Ordericus Vitalis, "relieved with bounteous alms in the name of her Redeemer."

A magnificent tomb was raised to her memory, by her sorrowing lord, adorned with precious stones and elaborate sculpture; and her epitaph, in Latin verse, was emblazoned thereon in letters of gold, setting forth in pompous language the lofty birth and noble qualities of the illustrious dead. The following is a translation of the quaint monkish rhymes, which defy the imitative powers of modern poetry:—

"Here rests within this fair and stately tomb,  
Matilda, scion of a regal line;  
The Flemish duke her sire;<sup>1</sup> and Adelais  
Her mother, to great Robert, king of France,  
Daughter, and sister to his royal heir.  
In wedlock to our mighty William joined.  
She built this holy temple, and endowed  
With lands and goodly gifts. She, the true friend  
Of piety, and soother of distress,  
Enriching others, indigent herself;  
Reserving all her treasures for the poor;  
And, by such deeds as these, she merited  
To be partaker of eternal life:  
To which she pass'd November 2d, 1083."

Matilda's will, which is in the Imperial Library of Paris, in the register of the Abbey of the Holy Trinity of Caen,<sup>2</sup> fully bears out the assertion of her epitaph, touching her poverty; since, from the items in this curious and interesting record, it is plain that the first of our Anglo-Norman queens had little to leave, in the way of personal property; and, as to the bulk of her landed possessions, they were already settled on her son Henry.<sup>3</sup>

"I give," says the royal testatrix, "to the Abbey of the Holy Trinity my tunic worked at Winchester, by Alderet's wife; and the mantle embroidered with gold, which is in my chamber, to make a cope. Of my two golden girdles, I give that which is ornamented with emblems, for the purpose of suspending the lamp before the great altar.

"I give my large candelabra, made at St. Lo, my crown, my sceptre, my cups in their cases, another cup made in England, with all my horse-trappings, and all my vessels; and, lastly, I give the lands of Quetchou and Cotentin, except those which I may already have disposed of in my

<sup>1</sup> Baldwin, Matilda's father, was the descendant of the six foresters, as the first sovereigns of Flanders were called.      <sup>2</sup> Ducarel's *Norman Antiquities*.

<sup>3</sup> I am indebted to the private communication of that great h'storian Dr. Lingard, for this information.

lifetime, with two dwellings in England; and I have made all these bequests with the consent of my husband."

It is amusing to trace the feminine feeling with regard to dress and *bijouterie*, which has led the dying queen to enumerate, in her last will and testament, her embroidered tunic, girdle, and mantle, with sundry other personal decorations, before she mentions the lands of Quetchou and Cotentin, and her two dwellings in England; which are evidently objects of far less importance, in her opinion, than her rich array.

Ducarel tells us, that among the records preserved in the archives of the Holy Trinity at Caen, there is a curious MS. containing an account of Matilda, the royal foundress's wardrobe, jewels, and toilette; but he was unable to obtain a sight of this precious document, because of the jealous care with which it was guarded by those holy ladies, the abbess and nuns of that convent.<sup>1</sup>

Till the middle of the seventeenth century, the portraits of Matilda and William were carefully preserved on the walls of St. Stephen's Chapel at Caen. The queen had caused these portraits to be painted when this magnificent endowment was founded.<sup>2</sup> We have seen, by the Bayeux tapestry, that Matilda took great delight in pictorial memorials; and if we may judge by the engraving from this portrait, preserved in Montfaucon, it were a pity that so much grace and beauty should fade from the earth without remembrance. Her costume is singularly dignified and becoming. The robe simply gathered round the throat, a flowing veil falling from the back of the head on the shoulders, is confined by an elegant circlet of gems. The face is beautiful and delicate, the hair falls in waving tresses round her throat; with one hand she confines her drapery, and holds a book; she extends her sceptre with the other, in an attitude full of grace and dignity. Montfaucon declares that this painting was actually copied from the wall, before the room in which it was preserved was pulled down. The elegance of the design and costume ought not to raise doubts of its authenticity, for it is well known that all remains of art were much better executed before the destruction of Constantinople than after that period. Female costume, with the exception of some tasteless attire which crept into the uproarious court of William Rufus, was elegant and dignified; the noble circlet, the flowing transparent veil, the natural curls parted on each side of the brow, the vestal stole drawn just round the neck, in regular folds, the falling sleeves, the gently belted waist with its gemmed zone, confining the plaits of a garment that swept the ground in rich fulness, altogether formed a costume which would not have disgraced a Grecian statue. We shall see this elegant dress superseded in time, by the monstrous Syrian caps, of sugar-loaf or horned form, and by the heraldic tabards, and surcoats, seemingly made of patchwork, which deformed female costumes in succeeding ages: but we must not look for these barbarisms at the date of Matilda's portrait.

Matilda bore ten children to her royal spouse, namely, four sons and

<sup>1</sup> Ducarel's Norman Antiquities.

<sup>2</sup> Montfaucon's Monumens de la Monarchie Française.

six daughters. Robert, surnamed Courthose, her eldest son, succeeded his father as duke of Normandy.

This darling son of Matilda's heart is thus described in the old chronicler's lines :—

“He was y-vox (grown) ere his fader to England came,  
Thick man he was enow, but not well long;  
Square was he, and well made for to be strong.  
Before his fader, once on a time, he did sturdy deed,  
When he was young, who beheld him, and these words said :  
‘By the uprising of God, Robelyn me sall see  
The Courthose, my young son, a stalwart knight sall be ;’—  
For he was somewhat short, so he named him Courthose,  
And he might never after this name lose.  
He was quiet of counsel and speech and of body strong,  
Never yet man of might in Christendom ne in Paynim,  
In battail from his steed could bring him down.”

After the death of Matilda, Robert broke out into open revolt against his royal father once more ; and the Conqueror, in his famous death-bed speech and confession, alluded to this conduct with great bitterness, when he spake of the disposition of his dominions : these were the words of the dying monarch. “The dukedom of Normandy, before I fought in the vale Sanguelac, with Harold, I granted unto my son Robert, for that he is my first begotten, and having received the homage of his baronage, that honour given cannot be revoked. Yet I know that it will be a miserable reign which is subject to the rule of his government, for he is a foolish, proud knave, and is to be punished with cruel fortune.”<sup>1</sup>

After the death of his father, Robert acquired the additional cognomen of the Unready, from the circumstance of being always out of the way when the golden opportunity of improving his fortunes occurred.

Robert, though an indifferent politician, was a gallant knight and a skilful general. He joined the crusade under Godfrey of Boulogne, and, to obtain the funds for this purpose, mortgaged the dukedom of Normandy to his selfish brother William, for the sum of six thousand six hundred and sixty-six pounds of silver.<sup>2</sup> He so greatly distinguished himself at the taking of the holy city, that of all the Christian princes, his fellow-crusaders, he was judged most deserving of the crown of Jerusalem.<sup>3</sup> This election was made on the Easter-eve, as they all stood at the high altar in the temple, each holding an unlighted wax taper in his hand, and beseeching God to direct their choice ; when the taper which duke Robert held, becoming ignited without any visible agency, it was regarded by the rest of the Croises as a miraculous intimation in his favour, and he was entreated to accept the kingdom.<sup>4</sup>

Robert, however, at that critical juncture, hearing of the death of William Rufus, refused the proffered diadem, and returned to Europe under the idea that he should obtain the crown of England ; but not only did

<sup>1</sup> See death-bed speech of the Conqueror, in Speed's Chronicle.

<sup>2</sup> S. Dunelm. Hoveden. Brompton.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew Paris. Polychronicon. Speed.

<sup>4</sup> Matthew Paris.

ne fail of dispossessing his brother Henry of England, but he was finally defeated by him at the battle of Tinchebray, stripped of his dukedom, and made prisoner. After a weary captivity of eight-and-twenty years, Robert died at Cardiff Castle. While in the Holy Land, he had married the beautiful and amiable Sybilla, daughter of the Count Conversana, by whom he had one son, named William.

Richard, the second son of William the Conqueror and Matilda, died in England in the lifetime of his parents, as we have already stated. William, their third son, surnamed Rufus or Rous,<sup>1</sup> from the colour of his hair, and called by the Saxon historians the "Red King," succeeded to the crown of England after his father's death. He was slain in the New Forest, by the erring shaft of his favourite hunting companion, Sir Walter Tyrrel, whom he familiarly called Wat de Poix, from the name of Tyrrel's estate in Picardy.

Henry, the fourth and youngest son of William and Matilda, won the surname of Beauclerc, by his scholastic attainments, and succeeded to the throne of England after the death of William Rufus. The personal history of this prince will be found in the memoirs of his two queens, Matilda of Scotland and Adelicia of Louvaine.

There is a great confusion among historians and genealogists, respecting the names of the daughters of Matilda and the Conqueror, and the order of their birth, no two writers appearing to agree on that point, except with regard to the eldest princess, Cecilia, who was veiled a nun in the Abbey of Fescamp, and became the abbess of the nunnery of the Holy Trinity, founded by her mother Matilda.<sup>2</sup> William of Malmesbury, who wrote in the reign of Henry I., when enumerating the daughters of the Conqueror, says, "Cecilia the abbess of Caen still survives."

The generality of historians mention Constance, the wife of Alan duke of Bretagne, as the second daughter of this illustrious pair. Ordericus Vitalis, a contemporary, calls her the third,<sup>3</sup> and Agatha the second daughter. Of Agatha he relates the following interesting particulars. "This princess, who had been formerly affianced to Harold, was demanded of her father in marriage, by Alphonso king of Galicia; but manifested the greatest repugnance to this alliance." She told her father "that her heart was devoted to her first spouse," as she called Harold,<sup>4</sup> "and that she should consider it an abomination if she gave her hand to another. She had seen and loved her Saxon betrothed, and she revolted from a union with the foreign monarch whom she had never seen;" and bursting into tears, she added, with passionate emotion, "that she prayed that the Most High would rather take her to himself than allow her ever to be transported into Spain." Her prayer was granted, and the reluctant bride died on her journey to her unknown lord. Her remains were conveyed to her native land, and interred at Bayeux, in the church of St. Mary the perpetual virgin.<sup>5</sup> Sandford calls this princess the sixth daughter. If so, she could not have been the betrothed of Harold, but of earl Edwin; and indeed, if we reflect on the great disparity in age

<sup>1</sup> "Après William Bastardus regna Will le Rous."—Fitz-Stephen's Chronicle.

<sup>2</sup> Ordericus Vitalis. William of Malmesbury.

<sup>3</sup> Ordericus Vitalis. Malmesbury.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.



between Harold and the younger daughters of William of Normandy and take into consideration the circumstances of his breach of contract with the little Norman lady, and that he died the husband of another woman, it is scarcely probable that his memory could have been cherished with such a degree of passionate fondness as Ordericus Vitalis attributes to the lady Agatha; whereas Edwin was young, and remarkable for his beauty; he had, in all probability, been privileged with some intimacy with the princess, whom the Conqueror had promised to bestow on him in marriage. The breach of this promise on the part of William, too, was the cause of Edwin's revolt, which implies that the youthful thane was deeply wounded at the refusal of the Norman monarch to fulfil his engagement; and it is at least probable, that to the princess who had innocently been made a snare to him by her guileful sire, he might have become an object of the tenderest and most lasting affection.

Malmsbury, speaking of this princess, says, "Agatha, to whom God granted a virgin death, was so devoted to the exercises of religion, that after her decease it was discovered that her knees had become hard like horn with constant kneeling."<sup>1</sup>

W. Gemiticensis and some other ancient chroniclers assert, that it was to Adeliza, the fifth daughter of William and Matilda, that Harold was contracted, and that she died young. Perhaps this is the same princess whom Ordericus Vitalis mentions as their fourth daughter, of whom he says, "Adelaide, very fair and very noble, recommended herself entirely to a life of devotion, and made a holy end, under the direction of Roger de Beaumont."

Adela, or Adelia, generally classed as the fourth daughter of William and Matilda, Ordericus Vitalis places as the fifth, and says, "She was sought in marriage by Stephen earl of Blois, who was desirous of allying himself with the aspiring family of the Conqueror, and by the advice of William's counsellors she was united to him. The marriage took place at Breteuil, and the marriage fêtes were celebrated at Chartres. This princess was a learned woman, and possessed of considerable diplomatic talents. She had four sons: William, an idiot; Thibaut, surnamed the great earl of Champagne; Stephen de Blois, who succeeded to the English throne after the death of Henry I.; and Henry, bishop of Winchester. After the death of the count de Blois, her husband, the countess Adela took the veil at Mareigny."<sup>2</sup>

Gundred, the sixth and youngest daughter of the Conqueror and Matilda, was married to William de Warren, a powerful Norman noble, and the first earl of Surrey in England. By him the lady Gundred had two sons, William, the successor of his father and the progenitor of a mighty line of earls of that family, and Rainold, who died without issue. The countess Gundred died in child-bed at Castleacre in Norfolk, and is buried in the chapter-house of St. Pancras church, within the priory, at Lewes in Sussex.<sup>3</sup>

The death of his beloved queen Matilda afflicted the Conqueror very deeply. He wept excessively, for many days after her decease; and to

<sup>1</sup>Ordericus Vitalis. Malmsbury.

<sup>2</sup>Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>3</sup>Sandford.

testify how keenly he felt her loss, he renounced his favourite amusement of hunting, and all the boisterous sports in which he formerly delighted.<sup>1</sup> After this event his temper became melancholy and irritable, to which, indeed, a train of public calamities and domestic vexations might in a great measure contribute. To the honour of Matilda, it has been asserted by some of the historians of the period, that she used her influence over the mind of her mighty lord, for the mitigation of the sufferings of the people whom he had subjugated to his yoke. Thomas Rudbourne, the author of the *Annals of Winton*, says, "King William, by the advice of Matilda, treated the English kindly as long as she lived, but after the death of Matilda he became a thorough tyrant."<sup>2</sup> It is certainly true, that after Matilda left England in 1070, the condition of the people became infinitely worse, and it is possible that it might be aggravated by her death.

Not only the happiness, but the worldly prosperity, of William, appeared sensibly diminished during his widowed state. In the course of the four years that he survived his consort, he experienced nothing but trouble and disquiet.<sup>3</sup>

William met with the accident which caused his death, at the storming of the city of Mantes. He had roused himself from a sick bed, to execute a terrible vengeance on the French border, for the ribald joke which his old antagonist, the king of France, had passed on his malady; and in pursuance of his declaration "that he would set all France in a blaze at his uprising," he had ordered the city to be fired. While he was with savage fury encouraging his soldiers to pursue the work of destruction to which he had incited them, his horse, chancing to set his foot on a piece of burning timber, started, and occasioned his lord so severe an injury from the pummel of the saddle, as to bring on a violent access of fever.<sup>4</sup> Being unable to remount his horse, after an accident which must have appeared to him like a retributive chastisement for the barbarous deed in which he was engaged, he was conveyed in a litter to Rouen, where, perceiving he drew near his end, he began to experience some compunctious visitings of conscience, for the crimes and oppressions of which he had been guilty.

In the first place, he ordered large sums to be distributed to the poor, and likewise for the building of churches, especially those which he had recently burnt at Mantes; next he set all the Saxon prisoners at liberty whom he had detained in his Norman prisons; among them were Morcar, and Ulnoth, the brother of Harold, who had remained in captivity from his childhood, when he was given in hostage by earl Godwin to Edward the Confessor. The heart of the dying monarch being deeply touched with remorse, he confessed that he had done Morcar much wrong, and bitterly bewailed the blood he had shed in England, and the desolation and woe he had caused in Hampshire, for the sake of planting

<sup>1</sup> *Ordericus Vitalis*.

<sup>2</sup> "Istius Matildis consilio Wilhelmus Rex pacifice cum Anglis tractabat, quamdiu ipsa vixisset; post mortem verò ipsius Matildis omnem induit tyrannidem." *Winton, Anglia Sacra*, i. 257. *Thomæ Rudborne Hist. Major*.

<sup>3</sup> *Malsbury*. *Ordericus Vitalis*.

<sup>4</sup> *Malsbury*. *Higden*.

the New Forest, protesting "that having so misused that fair and beautiful land, he dared not appoint a successor to it, but left the disposal of that matter in the hands of God."<sup>1</sup> He had, however, taken some pains, by writing a letter to Lanfranc, expressive of his earnest wish that William Rufus should succeed him in his regal dignity, and to secure the crown of England to this his favourite son—for whom he called, as soon as he had concluded his edifying acknowledgment of the errors of his past life;—and sealing the letter with his own seal, he put it into the hands of the prince, bidding him hasten to England with all speed, and deliver it to the archbishop. He then blessed him with a farewell kiss, and dismissed him.

When the Conqueror had settled his temporal affairs, he caused himself to be removed to Hermentrude, a pleasant village near Rouen,<sup>2</sup> that he might be more at liberty to prepare himself for death. On the 9th of September the awful change which he awaited took place. Hearing the sound of the great bell in the metropolitan church of St. Gervis, near Rouen, William, raising his exhausted frame from the supporting pillows, asked "What it meant?"<sup>3</sup>

One of his attendants replying, "That it then rang prime to Our Lady," the dying monarch, lifting his eyes to heaven, and spreading abroad his hands, exclaimed, "I commend myself to that blessed Lady, Mary the mother of God, that she by her holy intercession may reconcile me to her most dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ;" and with these words he expired, in the sixty-fourth year of his age, 1087, after a reign of fifty-two years in Normandy, and twenty-one in England.

His eldest son, Robert, was absent in Germany at the time of his death;<sup>4</sup> William was on his voyage to England; Henry, who had taken charge of his obsequies, suddenly departed on some self-interested business, and all the great officers of the court having dispersed themselves, some to offer their homage to Robert, and others to William, the inferior servants of the household, with some of their rapacious confederates, took the opportunity of plundering the house where their sovereign had just breathed his last, of all the money, plate, wearing apparel, hangings, and precious furniture; they even stripped the person of the royal dead, and left his body naked upon the floor.<sup>5</sup>

Every one appeared struck with consternation and dismay, and neither the proper officers of state, nor the sons of the deceased king, issuing the necessary orders respecting the funeral, the remains of the Conqueror were left wholly neglected, till Herlewin, a poor country knight,—but in all probability the same Herlewin who married his mother Arlotta,—undertook to convey the royal corpse to Caen at his own cost, for interment in the abbey of St. Stephen, where it was met by prince Henry and a procession of monks.<sup>6</sup> Scarcely, however, had the burial rites commenced, when there was a terrible alarm of fire in that quarter of the town; and as there was great danger of the devouring element communicating to the cloisters of St. Stephen, the monks, who were far

<sup>1</sup> See William's death-bed confession in Speed.

<sup>2</sup> Ordericus Vitalis. Malsbury.

<sup>3</sup> Ordericus Vitalis. Brompton. Malsbury. Speed.

<sup>4</sup> Eadmer.

<sup>5</sup> Ordericus Vitalis. Brompton.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

more concerned for the preservation of their stately abbey than for the lifeless remains of the munificent founder, scampered out of the church, without the slightest regard to decency, or the remonstrances of prince Henry and the faithful Herlewin. The example of the ecclesiastics was followed by the secular attendants, so that the hearse of the mighty William was in a manner wholly deserted, till the conflagration was suppressed.<sup>1</sup> The monks then re-entered the holy fane, and proceeded with the solemnity, if so it might be called; but the interruptions and accidents with which it had been marked were not yet ended; for when the funeral sermon was finished, the stone coffin set in the grave which had been dug in the chancel between the choir and the altar, and the body ready to be laid therein,<sup>2</sup> Anselm Fitz-Arthur, a Norman gentleman, stood forth and forbade the interment: "This spot," said he, "was the site of my father's house, which this dead duke took violently from him, and here, upon part of mine inheritance, founded this church. This ground I therefore challenge, and I charge ye all, as ye shall answer it at the great and dreadful day of judgment, that ye lay not the bones of the despoiler on the hearth of my fathers."<sup>3</sup>

The effect of this bold appeal of a solitary individual, was an instant pause in the burial rite of the deceased sovereign. The claims of Anselm Fitz-Arthur were examined, and his rights recognised by prince Henry, who prevailed upon him, as the lawful owner of the soil, to accept sixty shillings as the price of the grave, and to suffer the interment of his royal father to proceed, on the condition of his pledging himself to pay the full value of the rest of the land.<sup>4</sup> The compensation was stipulated between Anselm Fitz-Arthur and prince Henry, standing on either side the grave, on the verge of which the unburied remains of the Conqueror rested, while the agreement was ratified, in the presence of the mourners and assistant priests and monks, whereby Henry promised to pay, and Fitz-Arthur to receive, one hundred pounds of silver, as the purchase of the ground on which William had, thirty-five years previously, wrongfully founded the abbey of St. Stephen's, to purchase a dispensation from the pope for his marriage with his cousin Matilda of Flanders.

The bargain having been struck, and the payment of the sixty shillings earnest money (for the occupation of the seven feet of earth, required, as the last abode of the Conqueror of England) being tendered by the prince and received by Fitz-Arthur,—strange interlude as it was in a royal funeral,—the obsequies were suffered to proceed. According to some historians, an accident occurred in placing the lid on the stone coffin, attended with such unpleasant results that mourners, monks, and assistant priests, after vainly censuring the chancel with additional clouds of incense, fled the church a second time before the interment was completed.<sup>5</sup> This tale, inasmuch as it was refuted by the appearance of the royal remains when the grave was opened upwards of four hundred and fifty years afterwards, we are disposed to regard as a piece of mingled

<sup>1</sup> Ordericus Vitalis. Speed. Brompton. Malmsbury.

<sup>2</sup> Speed.

<sup>3</sup> Eadmer. Malmsbury. Ordericus Vitalis. <sup>4</sup> Ordericus Vitalis. M. Paris.

<sup>5</sup> See Speed's Chronicle.

marvellousness and malice on the part of the Saxon chroniclers, who have taken evident pleasure in enlarging on all the mischances and humiliations which befel the unconscious clay of their great national adversary, in its passage to the tomb. Yet surely so singular a chapter of accidents was never yet recorded, as occurring to the corpse of a mighty sovereign, who died in the plenitude of his power.

William of Normandy was remarkable for his personal strength, and for the majestic beauty of his countenance. It has been said of him, that no one but himself could bend his bow, and that he could, when riding at full speed, discharge either arblast or long-bow with unerring aim.<sup>1</sup>

His forehead was high and bald, his aspect stern and commanding; yet he could, when it pleased him to do so, assume such winning sweetness, in his looks and manner, as could scarcely be resisted; but when in anger, no man could meet the terror of his eye.<sup>2</sup> Like Saul, he was, from the shoulders upwards, taller than the rest of his subjects; but before he became too corpulent, his figure was finely proportioned. His eloquence was both powerful and persuasive. His habits were temperate, and his household was well regulated, with a view to the strictest economy; yet upon proper occasions he indulged his taste for magnificence, and took pleasure in appearing in all his royal state. He wore his crown three times in the year;<sup>3</sup> at Christmas or Midwinter-day, in the city of Gloucester; Easter at Winchester; and when he celebrated Whitsuntide, at Westminster. He wisely carried his court, it seems, at these festivals, to different parts of England.

William Rufus caused a stately monument, adorned with gold, silver, and precious stones, and very rich sculpture, to be erected,<sup>4</sup> to the memory of his father, before the high altar of St. Stephen's Abbey.<sup>5</sup>

The loftiness of stature which contemporary chroniclers have ascribed to William the Conqueror, was fully confirmed by the *post-mortem* examination of his body, which was made by the Bishop of Bayeux, in the year 1642, when, prompted by a strong desire to behold the remains of this great sovereign, he obtained leave to open his tomb.<sup>6</sup>

On removing the stone cover, the body, which was corpulent, and exceeding in stature the tallest man then known, appeared as entire as when it was first buried.

Within the tomb lay a plate of copper gilt, on which was engraved an inscription in Latin verse.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Robert of Gloucester. W. Malmesbury.

<sup>2</sup> W. Malmesbury.

<sup>3</sup> Saxon Annals. Ordericus Vitalis. Madox, Hist. Exchequer.

<sup>4</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>5</sup> Ducarel's Norman Antiquities.

<sup>6</sup> Thomas, archbishop of York, was the author of the Latin verse, of which the following lines present a close translation not unpoetical in its antique simplicity:—

He who the sturdy Normans ruled, and over England reigned,  
And stoutly won and strongly kept what he had so obtained;  
And did the swords of those of Maine by force bring under awe  
And made them under his command live subject to his law;  
This great King William lieth here entombed in little grave;  
So great a lord, so small a house sufficeth him to have.  
When Phœbus in the Virgin's lap his circled course applied,  
And twenty-three degrees had past, e'en at that time he died.

The bishop, who was greatly surprised at finding the body in such perfect preservation, caused a painting to be executed of the royal remains, in the state in which they then appeared, by the best artist in Caen, and caused it to be hung up on the abbey wall, opposite to the monument. The tomb was then carefully closed, but in 1562, when the Calvinists under Chastillon took Caen, a party of the rapacious soldiers forced it open, in hope of meeting with a treasure, but finding nothing more than the bones of the Conqueror wrapped in red taffeta, they threw them about the church in great derision. Viscount Falaise, having obtained from the rioters one of the thigh-bones, it was by him deposited in the royal grave. Monsieur Le Bras, who saw this bone, testified that it was longer by the breadth of his four fingers than that of the tallest man he had ever seen.<sup>1</sup>

The picture of the remains, which had been painted by the order of the bishop of Bayeux, fell into the hands of Peter Ildo, the goaler of Caen, who was one of the spoilers, and he converted one part into a table, and the other into a cupboard door; which proves that this portrait was not painted on canvas, but as usual, on wood. Some years after, these curious relics were discovered, and reclaimed by M. Bras, in whose possession they remained till his death.<sup>2</sup>

No sooner had the Calvinist spoilers plundered the abbey of St. Stephen, and exhumed the bones of the Conqueror, than they entered the church of the Holy Trinity, threatening the same violence to the remains of Matilda. The entreaties and tears of the abbess and her nuns at first had no effect on the rapacious bigots, who considered the destruction of church ornaments and monumental sculpture an acceptable service to God, quite sufficient to atone for the sacrilegious violence of defacing a temple consecrated to his worship, and rifling the sepulchres of the dead.<sup>3</sup> In this instance they contented themselves with throwing down the monument, breaking to pieces the effigies of the queen, which lay thereon, and opening the grave in which the royal corpse was deposited. At that juncture, one of the party observing that there was a gold ring set with a fine sapphire on one of the queen's fingers, took it off, and, with more gallantry than might have been expected from such a person, presented it to the abbess, Madame Anna de Montmorenci, who afterwards gave it to her father, the baron de Conti, constable of France, when he attended Charles the Ninth to Caen, in the year 1563.<sup>4</sup>

In 1642 the monks of St. Stephen collected the bones of their royal patron, William of Normandy, and built a plain altar-shaped tomb over them, on the spot where the original monument stood in the chancel. The nuns of the Holy Trinity, with equal zeal, caused the broken fragments of Matilda's statue and monument to be restored, and placed over her grave, near the middle of the choir, on a tomb of black and white marble, three feet high and six long, in the shape of a coffin, surrounded with iron spikes, and hung with ancient tapestry.<sup>5</sup>

The restored monument of Matilda remained undisturbed till nearly the close of the last century, when the French republicans paid one of

<sup>1</sup> Ducarel's *Norman Antiquities*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

their destructive visits to the church of the Holy Trinity at Caen, and, among other outrages against taste and feeling, swept away this memorial of its royal foundress ;<sup>1</sup> but while a single arch of that majestic and time-honoured fane, the church of the Holy Trinity, survives, the first of our Anglo-Norman queens, Matilda of Flanders,<sup>2</sup> will require no other monument.

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<sup>1</sup> Ducarel.

<sup>2</sup> In addition to our numerous authorities regarding Brihtric Meaw, we subjoin this important extract from a work containing great research among ancient monuments :—" Brietric, the son of Algar, a Saxon Thane, is stated, in Domesday, to have held this manor in the reign of Edward the Confessor ; but having given offence to Maud, the daughter of Baldwin count of Flanders, previous to her marriage with William duke of Normandy, by refusing to marry her himself, his property was seized by that monarch on the conquest, and bestowed, seemingly in revenge, upon the queen."—*ELLIS's History of Thornbury Castle*. Bristol, 1839.

# MATILDA OF SCOTLAND,

## QUEEN OF HENRY I.

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### CHAPTER I.

Ancestry of Matilda—Direct descent from Alfred—Margaret Atheling, her mother—Marries the king of Scotland—Matilda's birth—Her godfather—Education—First suitor—Her father invades England—His death—Her mother's grief—Pious death—Revolution in Scotland—Edgar Atheling carries the royal family to England—Princesses Matilda and Mary—Placed in Rumsey abbey—Their aunt abbess Christina—Matilda's brother Edgar—Restored to the throne of Scotland—The Atheling a crusader—Matilda at Wilton Abbey—Her literary education—Attachment between Matilda and Henry Beauclerc—Her other suitors—Early life of Henry—Education at Cambridge—Surname—Literary work by him—Legacy at the Conqueror's death—Poverty of Henry—Affronted by Matilda's suitor, earl Warren—Courtship of Matilda—Harsh rule of lady Christina—Henry seizes English throne—Asks Matilda's hand—Opposition of her aunt—Council of the church—Matilda's evidence—Her scruples—Importuned by Anglo-Saxons—Consents—Address to her by Anselm—Consent of the people—Her marriage and coronation—Saxon laws restored.

WHEN we consider the perils to which the representatives of our ancient line of sovereigns, Edgar Atheling and his sisters, were exposed during the usurpation of Harold, and the Norman reigns of terror, it almost appears as if an overruling Providence had guarded these descendants of the great Alfred, for the purpose of continuing the lineage of that patriot king on the throne of these realms, through the marriage of Henry I. with the daughter of Margaret Atheling, Matilda of Scotland. This princess, the subject of our present biography, is distinguished among the many illustrious females that have worn the crown matrimonial of England, by the title of "the Good Queen;" a title which, eloquent in its simplicity, briefly implies that she possessed not only the great and shining qualities calculated to add lustre to a throne, but that she employed them in promoting the happiness of all classes of her subjects, affording at the same time a bright example of the lovely and endearing attributes which should adorn the female character.

Some historians call this princess Matilda Atheling, and by these she is almost invested with the dignity of a queen-regnant, and styled the heiress of the Anglo-Saxon monarchs. In the same spirit, her grandson and representative, Henry II., is designated "the restorer of the English royal line." This is, however, as Blackstone justly observes, "a great error, for the rights of Margaret Atheling to the English succession were vested in her sons, and not in her daughter."<sup>1</sup> James I., on his acces-

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<sup>1</sup> Blackstone's Commentaries, vol. i.



sion to the throne of England, failed not to set forth that important leaf in his pedigree, and laid due stress on the circumstance of his descent from the ancient line of English sovereigns by the elder blood.

Alexander, the archdeacon of Salisbury (who wrote the tracts of the Exchequer, quoted by Gervase of Tilbury in his celebrated Dialogues of the Exchequer), has gravely set forth, in his red-book, a pedigree of Matilda of Scotland, tracing her descent in an unbroken line up to Adam. There is a strange medley of Christian kings and pagan sinners, such as Woden and Balder, with the Jewish patriarchs of holy writ, in this royal genealogy.<sup>1</sup>

Matilda is the only princess of Scotland who ever shared the throne of a king of England. It is, however, from her maternal ancestry that she derives her great interest, as connected with the annals of this country. Her mother, Margaret Atheling, was the grand-daughter of Edmund Ironside, and the daughter of Edward Atheling, surnamed the Outlaw, by Agatha, daughter of the emperor Henry II. of Germany. Her brother, Edgar Atheling, so often mentioned in the preceding biography, feeling some reason to mistrust the apparent friendship of William the Conqueror, privately withdrew from his court, and in the year 1068, (the same year in which Henry I. was born,) took shipping with Margaret, and their younger sister Christina, and their mother Agatha, intending to seek a refuge in Hungary, with their royal kindred; but, by stress of weather, the vessel in which they, with many other English exiles, were embarked, was driven into the Frith of Forth. Malcolm Canmore, the young unmarried king of Scotland, who had just regained his dominions from the usurper Macbeth, happened to be present when the royal fugitives landed, and was so struck with the beauty of the lady Margaret Atheling, that in a few days he asked her in marriage of her brother. Edgar joyfully gave the hand of the dowerless princess to the young and handsome sovereign, who had received the exiled English in the most generous and honourable manner, and whose disinterested affection was sufficient testimony of the nobleness of his disposition. The spot where Margaret first set her foot on the Scottish land was, in memory of that circumstance, called Queen's Ferry, the name it bears to this day.

The Saxon chronicler, of whom this lady is an especial favourite, indulges in a most edifying homily, on the providence which led the holy Margaret to become the spouse of the king of Scotland, who is evidently regarded by the cowed historian as little better than a pagan. Certain it is, that the mighty son of "the gracious Duncan" could neither read nor write. After her marriage, the Saxon princess became the happy instrument of diffusing the blessings of Christianity throughout her husband's dominions, commencing the work of conversion in the proper place, her own household and the court. The influence which her personal charms had in the first instance won over the heart of her royal husband, her virtues and mental powers increased and retained to the last hour of Malcolm's existence. He reposed the most unbounded confidence, not only in the principles, but the judgment, of his English

<sup>1</sup> Lib. Rub. fol. notata, 4.

consort, who became the domestic legislator of the realm. She dismissed from the palace all persons who were convicted of leading immoral lives, or who were guilty of fraud or injustice, and allowed no persons to hold offices in the royal household, unless they conducted themselves in a sober and discreet manner; observing, moreover, that the Scotch nobles had an irreverent habit of rising from table before grace could be pronounced by her pious chaplain Turgot, she rewarded those of the more civilized chiefs, who could be induced to attend the performance of that edifying ceremony, with a cup of the choicest wine. The temptation of such a bribe was too powerful to be resisted by the hitherto perverse and *graceless* peers, and by degrees the custom became so popular, that every guest was eager to claim his "grace-cup;" the fashion spread from the palace to the castles of the nobility, and thence descending to the dwellings of their humbler neighbours, became an established usage in the land.

Many deeply interesting, as well as amusing particulars, connected with the parents of Matilda of Scotland, the subject of our present memoir, have been preserved by the learned Turgot, the historian of this royal family, who, in his capacity of confessor to queen Margaret, and preceptor to her children,<sup>1</sup> enjoyed opportunities of becoming acquainted not only with all personal particulars respecting these illustrious individuals, but of learning their most private thoughts and feelings.

Turgot gives great commendation to his royal mistress, for the conscientious care she bestowed on the education of her children, whose preceptors she enjoined to punish them as often as their faults required correction.

Matilda, the subject of this memoir, was her eldest daughter, and was probably born in the year 1077. This we infer from the remarkable circumstance, of the elder brother of her future husband, Robert Courthouse, being her godfather.<sup>2</sup> Malcolm Canmore, her father, invaded England in that year, and Robert of Normandy was, on his reconciliation with his father, William the Conqueror, sent with a military force to

<sup>1</sup>Turgot was a Saxon of good family, born in Lincolnshire. He was delivered as a hostage to William the Conqueror, and shut up by him in Lincoln Castle. From thence he escaped to Norway. Returning from that country, he was shipwrecked on the English coast, and having lost everything he possessed in the world, he became a priest, and distinguished himself so much by his learning and piety that he was promoted to be prior of Durham. When Margaret Atheling became queen of Scotland she preferred him to the office of her confessor. He followed the fortunes of his royal pupil Matilda, the daughter of his illustrious patroness, after her marriage with Henry I.; and we find that the English monarch, who possibly wished to remove him from the queen, in 1107 warmly recommended him to his royal brother-in-law, Edgar of Scotland, as a fit person to be appointed to the bishopric of St. Andrew's. Turgot, however, died prior of Durham. He is said to have been the author of the "Chronicle of Durham," which goes by the name of "Simeon of Durham," and has been appropriated by a contemporary monk of that name. Turgot's Chronicle of the Lives of his royal mistress, Margaret Atheling, and her consort, Malcolm Canmore, king of Scotland, has been preserved by Fordun, and is frequently cited by Sir David Dalrymple.—Nicholson. Henry.

<sup>2</sup>Sir J. Hayward.

repel this northern attack.<sup>1</sup> Robert, finding his forces inadequate to maintain successfully a war of aggression, entered into a negotiation with the Scottish monarch, which ended in a friendly treaty. Malcolm renewed his homage for Cumberland; and Robert, who, whatever his faults might be as a private character, was one of the most courteous knights and polished gentlemen of the age in which he lived, finally cemented the auspicious amity which he had established between his royal sire and the warlike husband of the heiress presumptive of the Saxon line of kings, by becoming the sponsor of the infant princess Matilda. Some historians assert that the name of the little princess was originally Editha, and that it was, out of compliment to the Norman prince her godfather, changed to Matilda, the name of his beloved mother; the contemporary chronicler, Ordericus Vitalis, says, "*Matildem quæ prius dicta est Editha*,"—Matilda, whose first name was Edith.<sup>2</sup>

Matilda the Good received her earliest lessons of virtue and piety from her illustrious mother, and of learning from the worthy Turgot, the preceptor of the royal children of king Malcolm and queen Margaret of Scotland. While Matilda was very young, there appears to have been an attempt on the part, either of the queen her mother, or her aunt Christina Atheling, the celebrated abbess of Rumsey, to consecrate her to the church, or at least to give her tender mind a conventual bias, greatly to the displeasure of the king her father; who once, as Matilda herself testified, when she was brought into his presence, dressed in a nun's veil, snatched it from her head in a great passion, and indignantly tore it in pieces, observing at the same time, to Alan duke of Bretagne, who stood by, "that he intended to bestow her in marriage, and not to devote her to a cloister."<sup>3</sup>

This circumstance, young as she was, appears to have made a very deep impression on the mind of the little princess, and probably assisted in strengthening her determination, in after years, never to complete the profession of which she was, at one period of her life, compelled to assume the semblance.

Alan duke of Bretagne, to whom king Malcolm addressed this observation, was the widower of William the Conqueror's daughter Constance; and though there was a great disparity of years between him and Matilda, it appears certain, from his after-proposals, that the object of his visit to the Scottish court was to form a matrimonial alliance with the young Matilda;<sup>4</sup> and this was indubitably one of the unsuitable matches to which we shall find that Matilda afterwards alluded.

Matilda's uncle, Edgar Atheling, became resident at the court of her father and mother for some time, in the year 1091, Robert Courthose having sacrificed his friendship to the temporary jealousy of William Rufus. This displeasure did not last long, for both the eldest sons of William the Conqueror seem to have cherished an affection for the Atheling, and he was often treated with confidence and generosity by each. The misunderstanding, which occasioned Edgar's retreat into Scotland,

<sup>1</sup> See the preceding Memoir, Life of Matilda of Flanders.

<sup>2</sup> See Dr. Lingard's learned note, p. 126, vol. ii. ed. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Eadmer.

<sup>4</sup> Eadmer and Gemiticensis.

was productive of ultimate good to this country, as both Rufus and Malcolm joined in appointing him as arbiter of peace between England and Scotland, which were then engaged in a furious and devastating war.<sup>1</sup> Thus placed, in the most singular and romantic position that ever was sustained by a disinherited heir, Edgar conducted himself with such zeal and impartiality, as to give satisfaction to both parties, and the war terminated in a reasonable peace, which afforded a breathing time of two years to the harassed people of this island. After a reconciliation with William Rufus, which was never afterwards broken by the most trying circumstances, Edgar returned to the court of his favourite friend and companion, Robert of Normandy. The British kingdoms remained at peace till the dangerous illness of William Rufus, at Gloucester, tempted king Malcolm Canmore to invade his dominions, in the year 1093, for the purpose, as he said, of revenging the insults he had received from the Anglo-Norman sovereign; but in all probability his real object was to take advantage of Rufus's unpopularity with all classes, if his arms were crowned with success, and to set up the rival title of the descendants of the great Alfred, with whom he was now so closely united.

For the fifth time he now proceeded to ravage Northumberland. Hector Boethius and Buchanan insist that Malcolm was killed at the siege of Alnwick Castle, by the treachery of the besieged,<sup>2</sup> who, being reduced to the last extremity, offered to surrender, if the Scottish king would receive the keys in person. Malcolm of course acceded to this condition,<sup>3</sup> and coming to the gates, was there met by a knight bearing the keys on the point of a lance, which he offered to the king on his knee; but when Malcolm stooped to receive them, he treacherously thrust the point of the lance through the bars of his vizor, into his eye, and gave him a mortal wound, of the anguish of which he died.

This was heavy news to pour into the anxious ear of the widowed queen, who then lay on her death-bed, attended by her daughters, Matilda and Mary. The particulars of this sad scene are thus related by an eye-witness, the faithful Turgot.

During a short interval of ease, queen Margaret devoutly received the communion. Soon after, her anguish of body returned with redoubled violence; she stretched herself on the couch, and calmly awaited the moment of her dissolution. Cold, and in the agonies of death, she ceased not to put up her supplications to Heaven; these were some of her words:—

“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies; blot out mine iniquities; make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me; restore unto me the joy of thy salvation. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.”<sup>4</sup>

At that moment her young son, prince Edgar, returned from the disastrous English expedition, and approached her couch.

<sup>1</sup> Brompton. Hoveden. Y-Podigma of Neustria.

<sup>2</sup> Hector Boethius. Buchanan.

<sup>3</sup> Malmesbury.

<sup>4</sup> Turgot.

"How fares it with the king and my Edward?" asked the dying queen. The youthful prince stood mournfully silent.

"I know all—I know all," cried his mother; "yet, by this holy cross, I adjure you, speak out the worst." And Margaret presented to the view of her son that celebrated black cross which she had brought with her from England, as the most precious possession she derived from her royal Saxon ancestors.<sup>1</sup>

"Your husband and eldest son are both slain," replied the prince.

Lifting her eyes and hands towards heaven, she said, "Praise and blessing be to Thee, Almighty God, that thou hast been pleased to make me endure so bitter anguish in the hour of my departure, thereby, as I trust, to purify me in some measure from the corruption of my sins; and thou, O Lord Jesus Christ, who, through the will of the Father, hast given life to the world by thy death, O deliver me!"

While pronouncing the words "deliver me," she expired.

The reputation of her virtues, and the report that miracles had been wrought at her tomb, caused her name to be enrolled in the catalogue of saints, by the church of Rome. Whatever may be thought of the miracles, it is a pleasure to find the following enlightened passage, from the pen of a catholic ecclesiastic of the eleventh century:—

"Others," says Turgot, "may admire the indications of sanctity which miracles afford. I much more admire in Margaret the works of mercy. Such *signs* (namely, miracles) are common to the evil and the good; but the works of true piety and charity are peculiar to the good. With better reason, therefore, ought we to admire the deeds of Margaret which made her saintly, than her miracles, *had she performed any.*"

To this great and good man did the dying Margaret consign the spiritual guardianship of her two young daughters, the princesses Matilda and Mary, and her younger sons. Turgot has preserved the words with which she gave him this important charge; they will strike an answering chord on the heart of every mother.

"Farewell!" she said; "my life draws to a close, but you may survive me long. To you I commit the charge of my children. Teach them, above all things, to love and fear God; and if any of them should be permitted to attain to the height of earthly grandeur, O then, in an especial manner be to them a father and a guide. Admonish, and if need be, reprove them, lest they should be swelled with the pride of momentary glory, and through covetousness, or by reason of the prosperity of this world, offend their Creator, and forfeit eternal life. This, in the

<sup>1</sup> Carruthers' History of Scotland, vol. i. pp. 312—353.—The English viewed the possession of this jewel by the royal family of Scotland with great displeasure. It was enclosed in a black case, from whence it was called *the black cross*. The cross itself was of gold, and set with large diamonds. The figure of the Saviour was exquisitely carved in ivory. After the death of Margaret it was deposited on the high altar of Dunfermline. When Edward the First kept court there he seized on this cross as one of the English crown jewels, and carried it into England. Robert Bruce so vehemently insisted on its restoration, that queen Isabella yielded it, on the pacification, during her regency in 1327; but its surrender exasperated the English more than the most flagrant of her misdeeds.—See her Biography, vol. ii.

presence of Him who is now our only witness, I beseech you to promise and perform.”<sup>1</sup>

Adversity was soon to try these youthful scions of royalty with her touchstone; and of the princess Matilda, as well as her saintly mother, it may justly be said,

“Stern, rugged nurse, thy rigid lore  
With patience many a year she bore.”

Soon after the disastrous defeat and death of her royal father and eldest brother, Donald Bane, the illegitimate brother of Malcolm Canmore, seized the throne of Scotland, and commanded all the English exiles, of whatsoever degree, to quit the kingdom, under pain of death.<sup>2</sup> Edgar Atheling, Matilda’s uncle, then conveyed to England the orphan family of his sister, the queen of Scotland, consisting of five young princes, and two princesses.<sup>3</sup>

He supported Matilda, her sister and brothers, who were all minors, privately, from his own means. They were in considerable personal danger, from the accusation of one of the knights at the English court, who told William Rufus that the Saxon prince had brought into England, and was raising up, a family of competitors for the English crown. A friend of Edgar challenged and slew this mischievous talebearer; and William Rufus, supposing Providence had decided in favour of the innocent, treated Edgar and his adopted family with kindness and friendship.

The princesses Matilda and Mary were placed by their uncle in the nunnery of Rumsey, of which his surviving sister, Christina, was abbess; and for the princes, he sought and obtained an honourable reception for them at the court of William Rufus, who eventually sent him at the head of an army to Scotland, with which the Atheling succeeded in re-establishing his nephew, the elder brother of Matilda, on the throne of his ancestors.

Ordericus Vitalis confirms, in a great measure, the statements of

<sup>1</sup>Queen Margaret was buried at Dunfermline. Her body was disinterred at the Reformation, and the head is now preserved in a silver case at Douay, where the historian Carruthers declares he saw it at the Scotch college. It was in extraordinary preservation, with a quantity of fine hair, fair in colour, still upon it. This was in 1785.—Hist. of Scotland, vol. i. p. 313.

<sup>2</sup>Carruthers’ Hist. of Scotland, vol. i. p. 316.

<sup>3</sup>Hardinge, in his rhyming chronicle, thus quaintly enumerates the posterity of Margaret Atheling (See Henry Ellis’s edition):—

“Edward, Duncan, Edgar, Alixander the gay,  
And David also, (that kings were all they say,  
Eache after other of Scotlande throughout.)  
Whose mother is now St. Margarete without doubt.  
At Dunfermlyn shrined and canonised;  
By whom Malcolyn a daughter had also,  
King Henry’s wife the first, full well avised  
Queen Maude, that’s right well loved England through,  
Those crosses fair and royal, as men go,  
Through all England, she made at her expense,  
And divers good orders through her providence.”

Turgot, and, after relating the death of queen Margaret, adds, "She had sent her two daughters, Edith (Matilda) and Mary, to Christina, her sister, who was a religieuse of the abbey of Rumsey, to be instructed by her in holy writ. These princesses were a long time pupils among the nuns. They were instructed by them, not only in the art of reading, but in the observance of good manners; and these devoted maidens, as they approached the age of womanhood, waited for the consolation of God. As we have said, they were orphans, deprived of both their parents, separated from their brothers, and far from the protecting care of kindred or friends. They had no home or hope but the cloister, and yet, by the mercy of God, they were not professed as nuns. They were destined by the Disposer of all earthly events for better things."

Camden proves that the abbey of Wilton, ever since the profession of the saintly princess Editha,<sup>1</sup> was the place of nurture and education for all the young princesses of the Anglo-Saxon royal family. This abbey of Black Benedictine nuns had been founded by king Alfred, and since his days had always received a lady of his royal line as its abbess,—a custom which does not seem to have been broken by the deposition of his family.

Wilton Abbey had been re-founded by queen Editha, consort to Edward the Confessor.<sup>2</sup> While that monarch was building Westminster Abbey, his queen was employing her revenues in changing the nunnery of Wilton, from a wooden edifice into one of stone.

The abbey of Rumsey was likewise a royal foundation, generally governed by an abbess of the family of Alfred. Christina is first mentioned as abbess of Rumsey in Hampshire, and afterwards as superior of the Wilton convent. As both belonged to the order of Black Benedictines, this transfer was not difficult; but chroniclers do not mention when it was effected, simply stating the fact, that the Scottish princess first dwelt at Rumsey, but that when she grew up she was resident at Wilton Abbey, under the superintendence of the abbess Christina, her aunt. Matilda thus became an inhabitant of the same abode where the royal virgins of her race had always received their education.<sup>3</sup>

It was the express desire of the queen, her mother, who survived that request but a few hours, that she should be placed under the care of the lady Christina at Rumsey.

While in these English convents, the royal maid was compelled to assume the thick black veil of a votaress,<sup>4</sup> as a protection from the insults of the lawless Norman nobles. The abbess Christina, her aunt, who was exceedingly desirous of seeing her beautiful niece become a nun professed, treated her very harshly, if she removed this cumbrous and inconvenient envelope, which was composed of coarse black cloth or serge; some say it was a tissue of horse-hair. The imposition of this veil was considered by Matilda as an intolerable grievance. She wore it,<sup>5</sup> as she herself acknowledged, with sighs and tears, in the pre-

<sup>1</sup> Daughter of Edgar the Peaceable.

<sup>4</sup> Eadmer.

<sup>2</sup> Camden.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

sence of her stern aunt; and the moment she found herself alone, she flung it on the ground, and stamped it under her feet.

During the seven years that Matilda resided in this dreary asylum, she was carefully instructed in all the learning of the age. Ordericus Vitalis says she was taught the "*litteratoriam artem*," of which she afterwards became, like her predecessor, Matilda of Flanders, a most munificent patroness. She was also greatly skilled in music, for which her love amounted almost to a passion. When queen, we shall find her sometimes censured, for the too great liberality she showed in rewarding, with costly presents, the monks who sang skilfully in the church service.<sup>1</sup>

The superior education which this illustrious princess received during these years of conventual seclusion, eminently fitted her to become the consort of so accomplished a prince as Henry le Beauclerc. Robert of Gloucester, and Piers of Langtoft, and, above all, Eadmer, a contemporary, assert that the royal pair had been lovers before circumstances admitted of their union. These are the words of quaint old Robin on the subject:—

"Special love there had *ere*<sup>2</sup> been, as I understand,  
Between him and the king's fair daughter, Maud of Scotland.  
So that he willed her to wife, and the bishops also,  
And the high men of the land *radde*<sup>3</sup> him thereto."

Matilda received two proposals of marriage while she was in the nunnery at Rumsey; one from Alan duke of Bretagne, the mature suitor before mentioned, who demanded her in marriage of his brother-in-law, William Rufus, and obtained his consent, but he was prevented by death from fulfilling his engagement. Had it been otherwise, Matilda's only refuge from this ill-assorted union, would have been the irrevocable assumption of the black veil, of which she had testified such unqualified abhorrence.

The other candidate for the hand of the exiled princess, was the young and handsome William Warren, earl of Surrey, the son of the Conqueror's youngest daughter, Gundred, the favourite nephew of William Rufus, and one of the richest and most powerful of the baronage of England and Normandy.

The profession of Matilda was delayed for a time, by the addresses of these princes.<sup>4</sup> "But," continues the chronicler, "she was, by the grace of God, reserved for a higher destiny, and through his permission contracted a more illustrious marriage."<sup>5</sup> It is remarkable, that of the three lovers by whom Matilda was sought in marriage, one should have been the son-in-law, another the grandson, and the third the son, of that Norman conqueror who had established a rival dynasty on the throne of her ancestors.

Matilda pleaded her devotion to a religious life, as an excuse for declining the addresses of Warren, though, under existing circumstances, it seems strange that she should have preferred a lengthened sojourn in a

<sup>1</sup> Tyrrell.

<sup>2</sup> *Ere* means before, or formerly.

<sup>3</sup> *Radde*, advised.

<sup>4</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*



gloomy cloister, to a union with a young, handsome, and wealthy peer of the blood-royal of the reigning sovereign of England; and her refusal of Warren affords some reason for giving credence to the statements of Eadmer, Robert of Gloucester, and others of the ancient chroniclers, as to "the special love" that existed between Henry Beauclerc and Matilda, during the season of their mutual adversity. Matilda was at that time residing in the nunnery of Wilton, not far from Winchester, the principal seat of the Norman sovereign. When we reflect on the great intimacy which subsisted between Matilda's uncle, Edgar Atheling, and the sons of the Conqueror, it appears by no means improbable that prince Henry might have accompanied him in some of his visits to his royal kinswomen, in the nunnery of Wilton, and perhaps been admitted, under the sanction of his presence, to converse with the princesses, and even to have enjoyed the opportunity of seeing Matilda without her veil; which, we learn, from her own confession, she took every opportunity of throwing aside.

According to the testimony of the ancient chroniclers, especially the chronicle of Normandy, this princess was remarkable for her beauty.<sup>1</sup> Matthew Paris says she was "very fair, and elegant in person, as well as learned, holy, and wise." These qualities, combined with her high lineage, rendered her doubtless an object of attraction to the Norman princes. Henry Beauclerc was ten years the senior of his nephew Warren, but his high mental acquirements and accomplishments were, to a mind like that of Matilda of Scotland, far beyond the meretricious advantages which his more youthful rival could boast.

Robert of Gloucester, in his rhyming chronicle, gives this quaint summary of the birth, education, and characteristics of Henry :—

"In England was he born, Henri, this nobleman,  
In the third year that his father England wan;  
He was, of all his sons, best fitted king to be,  
Of fairest form and manners, and most gentle and free.  
For that he was the youngest to book his father him drew,  
And he became as it befel a good clerk enow.  
One time when he was young, his brother smote him, I wis,  
And he wept while his father stood by and beheld all this;  
'Ne weep now,' he said, 'loving son, for it shall come to be,  
That thou shalt yet be king, and that thou shalt see.'  
His father made him, at Westminster, knight of his own hand,  
In the nineteenth year of his age, &c. &c.  
Taller he was some deal than his brethren were,  
Fair man and stout enow, with brown hair."

Henry was regarded by the people of the land with a greater degree of complacency than the elder sons of the Conqueror, from the circumstance of his being an English-born prince. While yet a tender infant, his mighty sire named him as a witness, (the only male witness,) of the following curious charter to one of his followers, the founder of the family of Hunter of Hopton :—

<sup>1</sup> The chronicle of Normandy says that Matilda was a lady of great beauty, and much beloved by king Henry.

"I, William, the king, the third year of my reign,  
 Give to thee, Norman Hunter, to me that art both lief (loving) and dear  
 The Hop and the Hopton, and all the bounds up and down,  
 Under the earth to hell, above the earth to heaven.  
 From me and mine to thee and thine,  
 As good and as fair as ever they mine were.  
 To witness that this is sooth,  
 I bite the white wax with my tooth,  
 Before Jugge,<sup>1</sup> Maude, and Margery.  
 And my young sonne Henry,  
 For a bowe and a broad arrowe,  
 When I shall come to hunt on Yarrowe."<sup>2</sup>

The rhymes of this quaint feudal grant are undoubtedly far more agreeable to the year than the halting heroics of honest Robert of Gloucester, previously quoted, though compounded more than a century before his jingling chronicle was written. Several of the charters of William the Conqueror are in this form, and with the names of the same members of his family. It is probable that they were executed in the presence of his queen, "Maud;" "Jugge," (sometimes used as an abbreviation for Judith,) must have been his niece Judith, afterwards the wife of Waltheof; and Margery, a daughter, who is sometimes enumerated in his family, by the chroniclers; and to these the name of that notable witness, the baby Henry, was doubtless added, as a joke, by the royal sire. Biting the white wax was supposed to give particular authenticity to conveyances from the crown, which were formerly each duly furnished with a proof impression of that primitive substitute for the great seal of England, the royal eye-tooth, sometimes familiarly specified by the monarch as his "fang-tooth." This custom, which took its rise from very remote antiquity, was needlessly adopted by the Anglo-Norman line of sovereigns, whose broad seals are peculiarly fine workmanship, bearing their veritable effigies crowned, sceptred, and in royal robes, seated on the king's stone bench; and on the reverse of the seal the same monarch is figured, armed cap-à-pié, and mounted on a war-charger, gallantly appointed.<sup>3</sup> Such are the impressions affixed to all their charters.

It is among the boasts of Cambridge<sup>4</sup> that Henry, so celebrated for his learning, received his education there. The ancient annals of St. Austin's, Canterbury, however, affirm "that he was instructed in philosophy beyond seas, where, for his knowledge in the liberal sciences, he was by the French surnamed Beauclerc."<sup>5</sup>

The following dialogue took place between Henry and his royal sire, when the latter lay on his death-bed at Hermentrude,<sup>6</sup> and was conclud-

<sup>1</sup> Pronounced *Juey*, which rhymes to Margery; the rhymes, it will be observed, recur in the middle of the lines.

<sup>2</sup> Stowe ex Libro Richmond.

<sup>3</sup> Speed.

<sup>4</sup> J. Cairns Cantabrig.

<sup>5</sup> St. Austin's Lib. MSS. A learned writer in the *Archæologia* supposes that this appellation was won by Henry's English Fables in the Esopian style; adding that the celebrated Troubadour poetess, Marie of France, who flourished in the reign of our Henry III., has translated the English monarch's work into Norman French.

<sup>6</sup> Speed.

ing his elaborate confession of his past deeds of oppression and cruelty, with the verbal bequest of his dominions to his two eldest sons.

"And what do you give to me, father?" interrupted Henry, who stood weeping at the bedside, less touched, we fear, at the awful list of sins and wickednesses of which his dying sire had just disburthened his conscience, than at the tenour of a last will and testament in which he appeared to have no share.

"Five thousand pounds in silver, out of my treasury, do I give thee," replied the Conqueror.

"But what shall I do with treasure, if I have neither castle nor domain?" demanded the disappointed prince.

"Be patient, my son, and comfort thyself in God," rejoined the expiring monarch; "thy elder brothers do but go before thee: Robert shall have Normandy, and William England; but thou shalt be the inheritor of all my honours, and shalt excel both thy brethren in riches and power."

This oracular speech, though far enough from proving satisfactory at the time to the laudless Henry, was afterwards magnified into a prophetic annunciation of his accession to the united dominions of England and Normandy.

Discontented as Henry was with the paternal legacy, he was in such haste to secure its payment, that he left the last duties to the remains of his royal sire to the care of strangers, while he flew to make his claim upon the treasury of the departed sovereign; rightly judging, that unless he forestalled his elder brethren in taking possession of the bequest, his chance of receiving it would be but small. In fact, Robert, whose extravagance had exhausted all his resources before he succeeded to the dukedom of Normandy, besought his youngest brother to assist him with a loan of at least part of the money. Henry, who had all the worldly wisdom of a premature statesman, complied, on condition of being put in possession of his mother's bequest of the Cotentin. Robert agreed; but, after he had been foiled in his attempt to dethrone Rufus, he returned to Normandy with exhausted coffers, and wrongfully repossessed himself of the Cotentin. Henry, greatly enraged at this treatment, was preparing to take up arms against Robert, when the latter, finding himself attacked by William, and abandoned by his false ally, Philip of France, thought proper to make the most earnest solicitations to Henry for assistance, and forgiveness for the late outrage of which he had been guilty.

Henry, being mollified by the submission of his elder brother, and understanding that a plot was in agitation to deliver Rouen to William, suddenly entered the city, and seizing Conon, the head of the conspirators, charged him with his treason to the duke, and caused him to be flung headlong from one of the highest towers. By this decisive step Henry preserved the capital for Robert.

Robert and William soon after came to an amicable agreement, and, conceiving a sudden affection for each other, they terminated their quarrel by making their wills in each other's favour, without any mention of Henry. Henry regarded this as a great affront, especially on the part

of Robert, to whom he had rendered such signal services, and demanded of him either a restitution of his silver, or to be put in possession of the Cotentin. On Robert's refusal, he seized on Mount St. Michael, where he strongly entrenched himself.

The youthful adventurer maintained his rocky fortress with obstinate valour, against the united efforts of his august brothers of England and Normandy, till he was reduced to the greatest straits for want of water. He represented his distress to Robert, in a moving message, and obtained leave to supply his garrison with water, and a present of wine for his own use. Rufus upbraided Robert with his compliance, which he called "an act of folly."

"What!" replied Robert, with a sudden burst of that generous warmth of feeling which formed the redeeming trait of his character, "is the quarrel between us and our brother of that importance that we should make him die of thirst? We may have occasion for a brother hereafter, but where shall we find another if we destroy this?"

After Robert had besieged St. Michael's Mount during the whole of Lent, he brought Henry to terms; who, weary, perhaps, of keeping a stricter fast than even the church of Rome enjoined at that season, surrendered the fortress; and having permission to go whither he pleased, wandered about Germany and France for some time, forsaken of every one save four faithful domestics, by whom he was attended.

In the year 1094, we find, from Matthew Paris, that Henry was in England, and employed by William Rufus in assisting to quell the formidable rebellion of Robert Mowbray, the Lord of Northumberland. Prince Henry's poverty, and dependence on the caprices of his brother, the Red King, subjected him occasionally to the sneers of the wealthy Norman barons, but more especially of his kinsman and rival, Warren,<sup>1</sup> who took occasion, from his swiftness in pursuit of the forest game, "which oft-times," says the chronicle of Normandy, "he, for lack of horse or dog, followed on foot, to bestow the name of Deer's-foot on the landless prince. This greatly troubled Henry, who hated Warren to the death, but had no power to avenge himself, because the Red King loved Warren greatly."<sup>2</sup> It is possible that Warren's courtship of Matilda of Scotland was one cause of Henry's bitter animosity.<sup>3</sup> This courtship was sanctioned by Rufus, and some of the ancient chroniclers assert that Matilda was contracted to him, but this appears without foundation.

Henry was in his thirty-second year, when the glancing aside of Wat Tyrrel's arrow made him king of England. The chroniclers of that era record that, from whatever cause, omens, dreams, and predictions of the death of the Red King, were rife in the land, immediately preceding that event.<sup>4</sup> Prince Henry was at this fatal hunting party;<sup>5</sup> and Wace, the minstrel chronicler of the Norman line of princes, relates a most remarkable adventure that befell him on this occasion.<sup>6</sup> "Prince Henry being separated from the royal party, while pursuing his game in an adjoining glen of the forest, chanced to snap the string of his cross-bow,

<sup>1</sup> Wace.<sup>2</sup> Ibid.<sup>3</sup> Chronicle of Normandy by Wace.<sup>4</sup> Malsbury. Saxon Chron.<sup>5</sup> Dunelm.<sup>6</sup> Wace.

or arblast, and repairing to the hut of a forester, to get it mended or replaced, he was, the moment he entered this sylvan abode, saluted as king by an old woman whom he found there," whose description is somewhat similar to that of one of the witches in *Macbeth*.<sup>1</sup> The following is a literal version of her address, from the Norman French rhymes of Wace:—

"Hasty news to thee I bring,  
Henry, thou art now a king;  
Mark the words and heed them well,  
Which to thee in sooth I tell,  
And recall them in the hour  
Of thy regal state and power."

Before Henry had recovered from the surprise with which the weird woman's prediction had startled him, the cries of the Red King's attendants proclaimed the fatal accident that had befallen their royal master, and the hasty flight of the unlucky marksman by whose erring shaft he had died. Prince Henry acted as Rufus doubtless would have done in his case; he sprang to his saddle, and made the best of his way to Winchester, without bestowing a moment's care or attention on the body of his deceased brother, which was irreverently thrown into the cart of one Purkiss, a Saxon charcoal-burner, that was passing through the forest, and, on no gentler bier, was ignobly borne back to the city which he had quitted that morning with such proud parade.<sup>2</sup> Robert of Gloucester relates the circumstance, with his usual quaint minuteness; and among a number of his lame and tame lines, the following graphic couplet occurs, which we think our readers will consider worthy of quotation:—

"To Winchester they bare him, all midst his green wound,  
And ever as he lay the blood well'd to ground."

William Breteuil,<sup>3</sup> the royal treasurer, was also at this memorable hunting party, and with him prince Henry actually rode a race to Winchester—ay, and won it too; for when Breteuil arrived at the door of the treasury, he found prince Henry standing before it, who greeted him with a demand of the keys. Breteuil boldly declared, "That both treasure and crown belonged to the prince's eldest brother, duke Robert of Normandy, who was then absent in the Holy Land, and for that prince he would keep the treasures of the late king his master." Then Henry drew his sword, and, backed by his powerful friend, Henry Bellomonte, afterwards earl of Leicester, and other nobles of his party, forced the keys from his kinsman Breteuil, and took possession of the treasure and regalia. Breteuil loudly protested against the wrong that was done to duke Robert.

Some of the nobles who possessed large estates in Normandy, sided

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<sup>1</sup> Wace.

<sup>2</sup> Saxon Chron. The lineal descendants of the said charcoal-maker, by name Purkiss, still live within the distance of a bow-shot from the spot where Rufus fell, and continue to exercise the trade of their ancestor.—Milner's Winchester.

<sup>3</sup> William Breteuil was the son of the Conqueror's great friend and counsellor, Fitz-Osborn, surnamed the Proud Spirit.—See the preceding memoir.

with Breteuil, in advocating the rights of the royal Crusader; and the debate growing very stormy, it was considered more expedient to argue the momentous question in the council-chamber. Thither the nobles and prelates adjourned; but while they were engaged in advocating, according as interest or passion swayed, the rival claims of Robert and Henry to the vacant throne, the majority being inclined for the elder brother, (the brave but proverbially *unready* Robert,) Henry had successfully pleaded his own cause to the populace, in the streets of Winchester; and they, strong in numbers, and animated with sudden affection for the English-born prince, who had promised to bestow upon them English laws and an English queen, gathered round the palace, and quickened the decision of the divided peers in council, by making the name of Henry resound in their ears; and Henry, thus elected by the voice of the people, was immediately proclaimed king, at Winchester. The remains of the luckless Rufus were hurried into the grave, with a sort of hunter's mass, the following morning, at an early hour, in Winchester Cathedral;<sup>1</sup> and Henry hastened to London, where, on Sunday, the 9th of August, the third day after his brother's death, he was crowned in Westminster Abbey, by Maurice, bishop of London. Before the regal circlet was placed on his brow, "Henry, at the high altar at Westminster, promised to God and the people," says the Saxon Chronicle, "to annul the unrighteous acts that took place in his brother's reign, and he was crowned on that condition."<sup>2</sup>

Henry promised everything that could reasonably be demanded of him, and set about reforming the abuses and corruptions that had prevailed during the licentious reign of the bachelor king, and completely secured his popularity with the English people, by declaring his resolution of wedding a princess of the blood of Alfred, who had been brought up and educated among them. Accordingly he demanded Matilda, the daughter of Malcolm, king of Scotland, and Margaret Atheling, of her brother Edgar, king of Scotland. The proposal was exceedingly agreeable to the Scottish monarch; but great difficulties were opposed to the completion of this marriage, by those who were of opinion that she had embraced a religious life.<sup>3</sup> The abbess Christina, Matilda's aunt, in particular, whose Saxon prejudices could not brook the idea that the throne of the Norman line of sovereigns should be strengthened by an alliance with the royal blood of Alfred, protested, "that her niece was a veiled nun, and that it would be an act of sacrilege to remove her from her convent."

Henry's heart was set upon the marriage, but he would not venture to outrage popular opinion, by wedding a consecrated nun. In this dilemma, he wrote a pressing letter to the learned Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, who had been unjustly despoiled of his revenues by

<sup>1</sup> The monument that Henry I. raised for his brother Rufus, before the high altar at Winchester, is still to be seen there; he put himself to no great cost for funeral expenses, for it is a plain gravestone of black marble, of that shape called *dos d'ane*, to be seen, of brick or freestone, in country churchyards.

<sup>2</sup> Saxon Chronicle.

<sup>3</sup> Eadmer.

William Rufus, and was then in exile at Lyons, entreating him to return, and render him his advice and assistance in this affair. When Anselm heard the particulars of the case, he declared that it was too mighty for his single decision, and therefore summoned a council of the church at Lambeth, for the purpose of entering more fully into this important question.<sup>1</sup>

Matilda made her appearance before the synod, and was closely interrogated by the primate Anselm, in the presence of the whole hierarchy of England, as to the reality of her alleged devotion to a religious life.<sup>2</sup>

The particulars of her examination have been preserved by Eadmer, who, as the secretary of the archbishop Anselm, was doubtless an eyewitness of this interesting scene, and, in all probability, recorded the very words uttered by the princess.

The archbishop commenced by stating the objections to her marriage, grounded on the prevailing report that she had embraced a religious life, and declared, "that no motive whatever would induce him to dispense with her vow, if it had already been given to Almighty God."

The princess denied that there had been any such engagement on her part.

She was asked "if she had embraced a religious life, either by her own choice or the vow of her parents;" and she replied, "Neither." Then she was examined as to the fact of her having worn the black veil of a votaress in her father's court, and subsequently in the nunneries of Rumsey and Wilton.

"I do not deny,"<sup>3</sup> said Matilda, "having worn the veil in my father's court: for, when I was a child, my aunt Christina put a piece of black cloth over my head; but when my father saw me with it, he snatched it off in a great rage, and execrated the person who had put it on me.<sup>4</sup> I afterwards made a pretence of wearing it, to excuse myself from unsuitable marriages; and, on one of these occasions, my father tore the veil and threw it on the ground, observing to Alan earl of Bretagne, who stood by, that it was his intention to give me in marriage, not to devote me to the church."<sup>5</sup>

She also admitted that she had assumed the veil in the nunnery of Rumsey, as a protection from the lawless violence of the Norman nobles, and that she had continued to wear that badge of conventual devotion, against her own inclination, through the harsh compulsion of her aunt, the abbess Christina. "If I attempted to remove it," continued Matilda, "she would torment me with harsh blows and sharp reproaches: sighing and trembling, I wore it in her presence; but as soon as I withdrew from her sight, I always threw it off, and trampled upon it."<sup>6</sup>

This explanation was considered perfectly satisfactory by the council at Lambeth, and they pronounced, that "Matilda, daughter of Malcolm,

<sup>1</sup> Not long after the return of Archbishop Anselm to England, the king, by the advice of his friends, resolved to leave off his mistresses and marry; and he *having a very great affection for Matilda, daughter to Malcolm, late king of Scotland*, resolved, if it might be lawful, to marry her.—Tyrrell.

<sup>2</sup> Eadmer. Malmesbury.

<sup>3</sup> Eadmer.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

king of Scotland, had proved that she had not embraced a religious life, either by her own choice or the vow of her parents, and she was therefore free to contract marriage with the king." The council, in addition to this declaration, thought proper to make public the most cogent reason which the Scottish princess had given for her assumption of the black veil, on her coming to England; which was done in the following remarkable words.<sup>1</sup>

"When the great king William conquered this land, many of his followers, elated by so great a victory, and thinking that everything ought to be subservient to their will and pleasure, not only seized the provisions of the conquered, but invaded the honour of their matrons and virgins whenever they had an opportunity. This obliged many young ladies, who dreaded their violence, to put on the veil, to preserve their honour."<sup>2</sup>

According to the Saxon chroniclers, Matilda, notwithstanding her repugnance to the consecrated veil, exhibited a very maidenly reluctance to enter the holy pale of matrimony with a royal husband. It is possible that the report of the immoral tenour of Henry's life before he ascended the throne, which was evidenced by his acknowledging the claims of twenty illegitimate children, might be regarded by a princess of her purity of mind and manners as a very serious objection; and if, as many of the early chroniclers intimate, there had been a previous engagement between Henry and herself, she of course felt both displeasure and disgust at his amours with the beautiful Nesta, daughter of the prince of Wales, and other ladies too numerous to particularize. It is certain that after the council at Lambeth had pronounced her free to marry, Matilda resisted for a time the entreaties of the king, and the commands of her royal brother and sovereign, to accept the brilliant destiny which she was offered.

All who were connected with the Saxon royal line importuned Matilda, meantime, with such words as these: "O most noble and most gracious of women, if thou wouldst, thou couldst raise up the ancient honour of England: thou wouldst be a sign of alliance, a pledge of reconciliation: but if thou persistest in thy refusal, the enmity between the Saxon and Norman races will be eternal; human blood will never cease to flow."<sup>3</sup>

Thus urged, the royal recluse ceased to object to a marriage, whereby she was to become the bond of peace to a divided nation, and the dove of the newly-sealed covenant between the Norman sovereign and her own people. Henry promised to confirm to the English nation their ancient laws and privileges, as established by Alfred, and ratified by Edward the Confessor—in short, to become a constitutional monarch; and on those conditions the daughter of the royal line of Alfred consented to share his throne.

Matthew Paris says positively that Matilda was a professed nun, and so averse to this marriage, that she invoked a curse upon all the descendants that might proceed from her union with the Norman king

<sup>1</sup> Eadmer.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Saxon Chronicle.



But this is contradicted by all other historians; and if any foundation existed for the story, we think friend Matthew must, by a strange slip of the pen, have written down the name of the meek and saintly Matilda instead of that of the perverse virago, the abbess Christina, her aunt, who was so greatly opposed to those auspicious nuptials, and, for aught we know, might have been as much addicted to the evil habit of imprecation as she was to scolding and fighting.

Matilda's demurs, after all, occasioned little delay, for the archbishop Anselm did not return to England till October; the council at Lambeth was held in the latter end of that month, and her marriage and coronation took place on Sunday, November 11th, being St. Martin's day, just three months and six days after the inauguration of her royal lord at Westminster, August 5th, 1100; which we may consider quick work, for the despatch of such important business, and solemn ceremonials of state.

We give the singular scene of the marriage, in the very words of one who was a contemporary, and most likely an eye-witness.

"At the wedding of Matilda and Henry the First, there was a most prodigious concourse of nobility and people assembled in and about the church at Westminster, when, to prevent all calumny and ill report that the king was about to marry a nun, the archbishop Anselm mounted into a pulpit, and gave the multitude a history of the events proved before the synod, and its judgment, that the lady Matilda of Scotland was free from any religious vow, and might dispose of herself in marriage as she thought fit. The archbishop finished by asking the people in a loud voice, whether any one there objected to this decision, upon which they answered unanimously, with a loud shout, 'that the matter was rightly settled.' Accordingly the lady was immediately married to the king, and crowned before that vast assembly."<sup>1</sup> A more simple yet majestic appeal to the sense of the people, in regard to a royal marriage, history records not.

To this auspicious union of the Anglo-Norman sovereign Henry I. with Matilda of Scotland, a princess of English lineage, English education, and an English heart, we may trace all the constitutional blessings which this free country at present enjoys. It was through the influence of this virtuous queen that Henry granted the important charter which formed the model and precedent of that great palladium of English liberty, *Magna Charta*; and we call upon our readers to observe, that it was the direct ancestress of our present sovereign-lady, who refused to quit her gloomy conventual prison, and to give her hand to the handsomest and most accomplished sovereign of his time, till she had obtained just and merciful laws for her suffering country, the repeal of the tyrannical imposition of the curfew, and, in some slight degree, a recognition of the rights of the commons.

When the marriage of Matilda of Scotland with Henry I. took place, a hundred copies of this digest of the righteous laws of Alfred and Edward the Confessor were made, and committed to the keeping of the

<sup>1</sup> William of Malmesbury.

principal bishoprics and monasteries in England; but when these were sought for, in the reign of John, to form a legal authority for the demands of the people, Rapin says, only one could be found, which was exhibited to the barons by Cardinal Langton. This was, in fact, the simple model on which Magna Charta was framed.

It is supposed that Henry I., after Matilda's death, destroyed all the copies (on which he could lay his hands) of a covenant which, in the latter years of his reign, he scrupled not to infringe whenever he felt disposed.

Hardinge, after recording the death of the Red King, relates the accession of Henry I., and his marriage with Matilda of Scotland, in the following rude stanzas:—

"Henry his brother, the first king of that name,  
Was crowned with all the honour that might be;  
He reconciled St. Anselm who came home,  
And crowned Maude his wife full fair and free;  
That daughter was (full of benigne)  
To king Malcolyne and St. Margrete the queen  
Of Scotland, which afore that time had been;

Of whom he gat William, Richard, and Molde,  
Whose goodness is yet spoken of full wide;  
If she were fair, her virtues many-fold  
Exceeded far—all vice she set aside;  
Debates that were engendered of pride  
She set at rest with all benevolence,  
And visited the sick and poor with diligence.

The prisoners and women eke with child,  
Lying in abject misery ay about,  
Clothes, meat, and bedding new and undefiled,  
And wine and ale she gave withouten doubt,  
When she saw need in countries all throughout,  
Those crosses all that yet be most royal  
In the highways, with gold she made them all."<sup>1</sup>

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## MATILDA OF SCOTLAND,

### QUEEN OF HENRY I.

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#### CHAPTER II.

Popularity of Matilda's marriage—Called Matilda Atheling—Her charities—Her brother, king Alexander the Fierce—Her works of utility—Equitable laws of king Henry—Normans nickname the king and queen—Duke Robert's invasion—His consideration for Matilda—Matilda and archbishop's mediation—Henry's quarrels with archbishop Anselm—Duke Robert's visit—Presents his pension

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<sup>1</sup> Sir Henry Ellis's version.

to Matilda—Repents—Anselm's return to England—Matilda's friendship for him—Birth of princess Matilda—Robert regrets his pension—Reviles Matilda—Battle of Tinchebray—Capture of Robert and the queen's uncle Edgar—Pardoned through the queen's influence—Court first kept at Windsor by Henry and Matilda—Princess Matilda betrothed to the emperor—Court at Winchester—Removal of king Alfred's bones—Marriage of Prince William—Departure of empress Matilda—Parliament held—Woodstock palace completed—Revolt in Normandy—Illness of the queen—Her death—King Henry's grief—Burial of Matilda—Inscription to her memory—Her palace at Westminster—Present remains—Portrait of Matilda—Her children—Death of her eldest son—The empress Matilda.

MATILDA'S English ancestry, and English education, rendered the new king's marriage with her a most popular measure with the Anglo-Saxon people, of whom the great bulk of his subjects was composed. By them the royal bride was fondly styled Matilda Atheling, and regarded as the representative of their own regretted sovereigns. The allegiance which the mighty Norman conqueror, and his despotic son, the Red King, had never been able to obtain, except through the sternest measures of compulsion, and which, in defiance of the dreadful penalties of loss of eyes, limbs, and life, had been frequently withdrawn from these powerful monarchs, was freely and faithfully accorded to the husband of Matilda, Henry I., by the Saxon population. All the reforms effected by his enlightened government, and all the good laws which his enlarged views of political economy taught that wise monarch to adopt, were attributed, by his Anglo-Saxon subjects, to the beneficial influence of his young queen.

Robert of Gloucester was fully impressed with these ideas, as we may plainly perceive in the following lines in his rhyming chronicle, in which he speaks of Henry's marriage:—

“So that as soon as he was king, on St. Martyn's day I ween,  
He spoused her that was called Maude the good queen,  
That was *kind*<sup>1</sup> *heir of England*, as I have told before.

\* \* \* \* \*

Many were the good laws that were made in England,  
Through Maude the good queen, as I understand.”

Five-and-thirty years had elapsed since the metropolis had enjoyed the advantage of a resident court. Matilda of Flanders, during her brief visit to England, held her state at Westminster, the favourite abode of the two first Anglo-Norman monarchs; and the Londoners, whose prosperity had sensibly diminished in consequence of the entire absence of female royalty, beheld with unfeigned satisfaction the palace of Edward the Confessor, at Westminster, once more graced by the presence of a queen of the blood of Alfred, whose virtues, piety, and learning, rendered her a worthy successor of the last Saxon queen who had held her court there, Editha,

“That gracious rose of Godwin's thorny stem.”

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<sup>1</sup> *Kind* means, in ancient English, relationship; “next of kin,” a familiar expression, is derived from it.

Those to whom the memory of that illustrious lady was justly dear, were probably not unmindful of the fact, that the youthful queen, on whom the hopes of England were so fondly fixed, had received that genuine Saxon name at the baptismal font; and though, in compliment to her Norman godfather, she was called Matilda, she was also Editha.

Like her saintly predecessor, Matilda fully verified the primitive title bestowed by the Saxon on their queens, *Hlaffilge*, or the giver of bread. Her charities were of a most extensive character, and her tender compassion for the sufferings of the sick poor carried her almost beyond the bounds of reason, to say nothing of the restraints imposed on royalty. She imitated the example of her mother, the saintly queen of Scotland, both in the strictness of her devotional exercises, and in her personal attentions to those who were labouring under bodily afflictions.<sup>1</sup> She went every day in Lent to Westminster Abbey, barefoot, and clothed in a garment of haircloth; and she would wash and kiss the feet of the poorest people, for which, according to Robert of Gloucester, she was once reproved, not without reason, by a courtier. He had his answer, however, as our readers will perceive from the following curious dialogue:—

“ ‘Madam, for Godde’s love is this well ado  
 To handle such unclean limbs, and to kiss so?  
 Foul would the king think if this thing he wist,  
 And right well avile him ere he your lips kist.’  
 ‘Sir, sir!’ quoth the queen, ‘be still. Why say you so?  
 Our Lord himself example gave for to do so.’ ”<sup>2</sup>

On another occasion, her brother, Alexander the Fierce, king of Scotland, when on a visit to the court of her royal husband, entering Matilda’s apartments, found her on her knees, engaged in washing the feet of some aged mendicants; on which she entreated him to avail himself of the opportunity of performing a good and acceptable work of charity and humiliation, by assisting her in this labour of love, for the benefit of his soul.<sup>3</sup>

The warlike majesty of Scotland smiled, and left the room, without making any reply to this invitation. Perhaps he was conscious of his want of skill as an assistant at a pediluvium party; or it might be that he had seen too much of such scenes during the life of his pious mother queen Margaret, and feared that his sister would carry her works of benevolence to extremes that might prove displeasing to the tastes of so refined a prince as Henry Beauclerc.

But to do Matilda justice, her good works in general bore a character of more extended usefulness; so much so, that we even feel the benefit of them to this day, in the ancient bridge she built over “my Lady Lea.” Once being, with her train on horseback, in danger of perishing while fording the river Lea, at Oldford, during a *high flood*, in gratitude for her preservation, she built the first arched bridge ever known in England, a little higher up the stream, called by the Saxons Bow ‘Bridge, still to

<sup>1</sup> Weever.

<sup>2</sup> Robert of Gloucester.

<sup>3</sup> M. Paris.

<sup>4</sup> Bow, from *bogen*, an arch, a word in the German language, pronounced with the *g* sounded like *y*, which brings it close to the Anglo-Saxon.

be seen at Stratford-le-Bow, "though the ancient and mighty London Bridge has been broken down."

Bow Bridge she built at the head of the town of Stratford; likewise Channel's Bridge, over a tributary stream of the Lea, the way between them being well paved with gravel. She gave certain manors, and a mill called Wiggin Mill, for ever, towards keeping in repair the said bridges and way.<sup>1</sup>

Matilda founded the hospital at St. Giles in the Fields, and also Christ Church,<sup>2</sup> which stood on the very spot now called Duke's Place, noted as the resort of a low class of Jews.

This excellent queen also directed her attention to the important object of making new roads, and repairing the ancient highways, that had fallen into decay during the stormy years which had succeeded the peaceful and prosperous reign of her great uncle, Edward the Confessor. By this means, travellers and itinerant merchants were greatly facilitated, in their journeys through the then wild and perilous country, which, with the exception of the four great Roman ways,<sup>3</sup> was only intersected by a few scattered cart-tracks, through desolate moors, heaths, and uncultivated wastes and woodlands. These public benefits, which Matilda the Good conferred upon the people from whose patriotic monarchs she derived her descent, were in all probability the fruits of her regency, during the absence of her royal husband in Normandy; for it is scarcely to be supposed that such stupendous undertakings could have been effected, by the limited power and revenues of a mere queen-consort.

Henry the First, be it remembered, was placed on the throne by the Saxon division of his subjects, who were the commons of England, and by them he was supported in his regal authority against the Norman aristocracy, who formed a powerful party, in favour of his elder brother's pretensions to the crown of England. The moral and political reforms with which Henry commenced his reign, and, above all, the even-handed measure of justice which he caused to be observed towards all who presumed to infringe the laws, gave great offence to many of those haughty nobles who had been accustomed to commit the most flagrant crimes with impunity, and to oppress their humbler neighbours, without fear of being arraigned for their misdeeds. The establishment of the equitable laws which protected the wives and daughters of Englishmen from insult, the honest trader from wrong and robbery, and the poor from violence, were attributed to the influence of Matilda, whom they insultingly styled "the Saxon woman,"<sup>4</sup> and murmured at the virtuous restraints which her presence and authority imposed upon the court.<sup>5</sup> The conjugal affection which subsisted between the royal pair, excited, withal, the ridicule of those who had been the profligate associates of

<sup>1</sup> Hayward's Three Norman Kings.

<sup>2</sup> Pennant.

<sup>3</sup> Which mighty works were of infinite use to our ancestors in ages later than the Norman era. Robert of Gloucester speaks of their utility in his day, and says,

"Thilk ways by mony a town do wend."

<sup>4</sup> Thierry.

<sup>5</sup> Eadmer.

the bachelor king, William Rufus; and it was universally displeasing to the haughty Norman peers, to see the king's gracious demeanour towards the hitherto oppressed and dispirited English portion of his subjects, for whom his amiable consort was constantly labouring to procure a recognition of their rights. "The malice of certain evil-minded men," says Eadmer, "busied itself in inventing the most cutting raileries on king Henry and his wife of English blood. They nicknamed them Leofric and Godiva, and always called them so when not in the royal presence."<sup>1</sup> It is probable that Warren, the disappointed suitor of Matilda, and his kinsman Mortimer, with others of the audacious Norman *queens*, who had previously exercised their wit in bestowing an offensive *sobriquet* on Henry before his accession to the throne, were among the foremost of those invidious detractors, who could not endure to witness the wedded happiness of their sovereign, and the virtuous influence of his youthful queen.

The invasion of duke Robert, Henry's eldest brother, on his return from the Holy Land, took place in the second year of Matilda's marriage. King Henry's fleet being manned with Norman seamen, and, of course, under the influence of Norman chiefs, revolted, and, instead of guarding the coasts of England from the threatened invasion of the duke, swept across the narrow seas, and brought him and his armament in triumph to Portsmouth, where he was joined by the majority of the Anglo-Norman baronage.<sup>2</sup> Robert had also his partisans among the English; for Edgar Atheling so far forgot the interests of his royal niece, queen Matilda, as to espouse the cause of his friend Robert against the king her husband.

Robert landed at Portsmouth, and marched direct to Winchester, where queen Matilda then lay in with her first-born child, William the Atheling. When this circumstance was related to the duke, he relinquished his purpose of storming the city, with the observation, "that it never should be said he commenced the war by an assault on a woman in childbed, for that would be a base action."<sup>3</sup>

Matilda duly appreciated this generous consideration, on the part of her royal brother-in-law and godfather, and exerted all her influence to negotiate a peace between him and her lord, in which she was assisted by the good offices of the archbishop Anselm; and this formidable crisis passed over without the effusion of a drop of blood.<sup>4</sup> These are Hardinge's words on the subject:

"But Anselm archbishop of Canterbury,  
And queen Matilda, made them well accord;  
The king to pay three thousand marks yearly  
To duke Robert, withouten more discord."

After this happy pacification, Henry invited Robert to become his guest at the court, where the easy-tempered duke was feasted and entertained, greatly to his satisfaction, by his royal god-daughter Matilda,<sup>5</sup> who, in her love of music, and the encouragement she bestowed on

<sup>1</sup> Eadmer. Thierry.

<sup>2</sup> Chronique de Normandie.

<sup>3</sup> Saxon Annals, A. D. 1101.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> M. Paris.

minstrels, or *trouvères*, quite coincided with the tastes of her sponsor and brother-in-law; "for," says Malsbury, "every poet hastened to the court of Matilda to read his verses to that queen, and to partake of her bounty."<sup>1</sup> So much did Robert enjoy his sojourn at Henry's court, that he stayed there upwards of six months, though his presence was greatly required in his own dominions.<sup>2</sup>

An unfortunate misunderstanding took place between Henry and the archbishop Anselm, early in the year 1103. This quarrel originated in an attempt made by the archbishop, to deprive the king of a privilege, which had been claimed by the Saxon monarchs, of appointing his own bishops. Anselm wished to restore the nomination to the chapters, which Henry resolutely opposed. Both appealed to the pope, but Anselm went to Rome, to plead his own cause against the king's three advocates, and remained in exile.

The following year Robert revisited England, either to demand payment of his pension, or to raise a revolt. He was, however, attended by only twelve gentlemen. Henry, having speedy information of his landing, declared, if he fell into his hands, he would keep him so closely imprisoned, that he should never give him any more trouble. "Not so, sire," replied the count de Mellent, "he is your brother, and God forbid that you should do so great a villany; let me meet and talk with him, and I will take care that he shall return quietly into Normandy, and give you acquittance of his pension withal."

"By my faith," replied the king, "I will make you do what you say."

The count then mounted his horse, and encountering duke Robert on the road to Southampton, greeted him with these words: "St. Mary! what brings you into this country? Who has given you such fatal counsel? You know you have hitherto compelled the king to pay you four thousand marks a-year, and for this cause you will be taken and put to death, or detained in prison for life. He is determined to be avenged on you, I promise you." When the duke heard this he was greatly disturbed, and asked "if he could not return to Southampton?" "No," replied Mellent, "the king will cause you to be intercepted; but even if you could reach that place, the wind is contrary for your escape by sea."

"Counsel me," cried the duke, "what I ought to do."

"Sire," replied the count, "the queen is apprised of the news, and you know that you showed her great kindness when you gave up the assault on Winchester, because she lay in childbed there. Hasten to her, and commit yourself and your people to her care, and I am sure she will guard you from all harm." Then duke Robert went to the queen, and she received and reassured him very amiably, and by the sweet words she said to him, and the fear he was in of being taken, he was

<sup>1</sup> Matilda was so generous a patron of poets and minstrels, that the chroniclers declare they crowded her court from all parts of Europe, and sang her praises, and presented her with their panegyrics; and the only fault left on her memory is, that she sometimes oppressed her tenants, and spent her revenues too closely, in providing rewards for these gentry.—William of Malsbury.

<sup>2</sup> Will. Gemiticensis.

<sup>3</sup> Chronique de Normandie.

induced to sacrifice those pecuniary claims on the king his brother, for which he had resigned the realm of England.

When Henry heard that his brother had granted an acquittance for this money to the queen, he sent to the queen, to come to him with duke Robert. Matilda brought the duke to the king, and the duke thus addressed him :

"Fair sire, I am come to see you out of affection, and not to injure either you or yours. We are brothers, born of one father and one mother. If I am the eldest, you have the honour of a crown, which is a much better thing. I love you well, and thus it ought to be. Money and rents I seek not of you, nor ever will. I have quitted to the queen all you owe me for this kingdom. Enter we now together into perfect amity. We will exchange gifts of jewels, dogs, and birds, with such things as ought to be between brothers and friends."

"We will do as you say," replied the king, "and thanks for what you have said."<sup>1</sup>

The Saxon chronicler and some other historians affirm, indeed, that he invaded England; "but it is plain," says Sir John Hayward, "that he only came for disport and play," that is, to recreate himself at the court of Henry Beauclerc, and to enjoy the agreeable society of the queen his god-daughter, with the music and minstrelsy in which they both so greatly delighted.

Well would it have been for the luckless Robert, if all his tastes had been equally harmless and refined; but he had propensities disgraceful to his character as an individual, and ruinous to his fortunes as a prince. The chroniclers relate that he indulged in such excess of revelry, while he was at the English court, that he was often in a state of inebriation for days together.<sup>2</sup>

According to some historians, Robert resigned his pension to Matilda at a carouse, and when he became aware of the folly of which he had been guilty, he was greatly exasperated, and bitterly reproached his brother Henry "with having cheated and despoiled him, by employing the queen to beguile him with fair words out of his pension, when he was under the influence of wine."<sup>3</sup>

There was nothing but animosity between the royal brothers, after this affair. Robert's indignation at the trick he had been played, led him to make use, not only of reproaches, but menaces, against Henry, who availed himself of that excuse to make war upon him. In the year 1104, Henry left the government of England in the prudent hands of Matilda, and embarked for Normandy. While there, he consented to meet Anselm, the archbishop, at the castle of l'Aigle, where, through the mediation of his sister Adela, countess of Blois, a reconciliation was happily effected. Anselm then returned to England, where he was met at Dover by the queen Matilda, who received and welcomed him with the greatest demonstrations of satisfaction.<sup>4</sup> As the venerable primate

<sup>1</sup>Chronique de Normandie, 248-9.

<sup>2</sup>Eadmer.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. Gemiticensis.

<sup>4</sup>Pascal II. admitted Anselm, the favourite priest and prelate of Matilda, to a seat near his right foot, saying, "We admit this prelate into our circle, he being, as it were, the pope of the farther hemisphere."—Godwin de Praes.



was in feeble health, the queen took the precaution of preceding him on the road from Dover to the metropolis, providing, as she went, for his comforts and accommodation.<sup>1</sup>

Matilda, independently of the feeling of political expediency which rendered this public testimonial of respect to the archbishop desirable, after the unpopular schism between him and her royal husband, was, in all probability, naturally inclined to testify her regard for a person who had been so actively instrumental in raising her to the exalted station which she then enjoyed.

Yet the return of Anselm was attended with circumstances which gave great pain to Matilda, as an English queen. Both the king and archbishop, after their reconciliation, united in enforcing inexorably the celibacy of the Anglo-Saxon clergy, whose lower orders had previously been able to obtain licenses to marry. Anselm now excommunicated all the married clergy.

Two hundred of these unfortunate Saxons, barefoot, but clad in their clerical robes, encountered the king and queen in the streets of London. They implored the king's compassion; he turned from them with words of insult. They then supplicated the queen to intercede for them, but Matilda, with tears in her eyes, assured them "that she dared not interfere."<sup>2</sup>

The year 1104 was marked by the birth of a princess, who was first named Alice, or Adalais,<sup>3</sup> but whose name the king afterwards changed to that of his beloved and popular queen, Matilda. This princess was afterwards the celebrated empress Matilda. Some writers, on the authority of Gervasius, the monk of Canterbury, assert that she was the first-born child of Henry and Matilda; but the fact that prince William was eighteen at the time when the fatal loss of the white ship deprived England of her heir apparent, in the year 1120, makes it evident that he was the eldest of the two. It has been said that Matilda placed her little daughter, for education and nurture, in the Royal Abbey of Wilton, where she had herself completed her studies.

The profound tranquillity that subsisted in her husband's dominions, during his frequent absences in Normandy, is a proof that Matilda understood the art of domestic government, and practised it with a happier effect than the two first Anglo-Norman sovereigns, whose reigns were so greatly disturbed by insurrections.

Henry, after his successful campaign in Normandy, returned to England—in his personal appearance, at least, an altered man. The Anglo-Normans had adopted the picturesque Saxon fashion—which, however, was confined to persons of high rank—of wearing their hair long, and flowing in ringlets on their shoulders; and the king was remarkable for the luxuriance and beauty of his love-locks, which he cherished with peculiar care, no doubt out of a laudable desire to conform to the tastes of his queen, the daughter of a Saxon princess. His courtiers imitated the royal example, which gave great scandal to the Norman clergy. One day, while the king was in Normandy, he and his train entered a

<sup>1</sup> Eadmer.<sup>2</sup> Lingard.<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

church, where an ecclesiastic of the name of Serlo, bishop of Seez, took up his parable on the sinfulness of this new fashion,<sup>1</sup> "which," he protested, "was a device of the evil one to bring souls into everlasting perdition; compared the moustached, bearded, and long-haired men of that age to filthy goats;" and, in short, made so moving a discourse on the unloveliness of their present appearance, that the king of England and his courtiers melted into tears; on which Serlo, perceiving the impression which his eloquence had made, drew a pair of scissors out of his sleeve, and, instead of permitting their penitence to evaporate in a few unmeaning drops, persuaded his royal and noble auditors to prove the sincerity of their repentance, by submitting their ringlets to his discretion, and brought his triumph to a climax, by polling the king and congregation with his own hands.<sup>2</sup>

Henry was then courting popularity, in the duchy of Normandy, and well knew that the readiest way to effect his object, was to win the good report of the monks. He had previously scandalized all piously disposed persons, by choosing for his private chaplain a priest whose only merit consisted in being able to hurry over matins and mass in half an hour. This was Roger le Poer,<sup>3</sup> afterwards the rich and potent bishop of Salisbury, whose hasty despatch of the morning service so charmed Henry, that he swore aloud in the church, "that he had at length met with a priest fit for a soldier." Roger, when he received this flattering commendation from the lips of royalty, was only a poor curate at Caen, but was advanced by Henry to the highest preferment in the church and state.

After Henry had submitted his flowing ringlets to the reforming shears of Serlo, he published an edict, compelling his lieges to relinquish these sinful adornments also.

Queen Matilda did not long enjoy the society of her royal husband in England, and during the brief period he spent with her at Northampton, in the winter season, his whole time and thoughts were employed in raising the means for pursuing the war in Normandy. His unfortunate brother, Robert, finding himself sorely pressed on every side, and left, by his own improvident folly, without resources for continuing the contest, came over to England unattended, and, repairing to the court at Northampton, forced an interview with Henry<sup>4</sup> (who was reluctant to admit him into his presence), and earnestly besought his compassion, telling him at the same time, "he was ready to submit everything to his brotherly love, if he would only permit him to retain the appearance of a sovereign." As it by no means suited Henry's policy to yield to the dictates of natural affection, he coldly turned away, muttering something to himself, that was unintelligible to the by-standers, and which he could not be induced to explain.

Robert's quick temper could not brook this contemptuous usage, and, in a paroxysm of rage, he indignantly assailed his younger brother with a storm of reproaches, mingled with abuse and menaces; and without waiting to employ the good offices of queen Matilda, through whose

<sup>1</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.<sup>2</sup> Ibid.<sup>3</sup> Godwin de Praes.<sup>4</sup> M. Paris.

kindly influence it is possible he might have obtained reasonable conditions of peace, he departed from Northampton the same hour.

In the spring, Henry once more committed the domestic affairs of his kingdom to the care of Matilda, and having levied an enormous tax on his subjects, to support the expenses of the war, embarked for Normandy.

Matilda was principally employed, during the king's absence, in superintending the magnificent buildings at New Windsor, which were founded by Henry, and in the completion of the royal apartments in the Tower of London. She, as well as Henry, patronised Gundulph, the episcopal architect, to whom England is indebted for the most magnificent and lasting of her public buildings. Many useful public works, to which we have before alluded, furnished, under her auspices, employment for the working classes, and improved the general condition of the people.

While civilization and the arts of peace were rapidly progressing, through the beneficial influence of Matilda, at home, the arms of her royal consort were universally triumphant in Normandy. The unfortunate Robert Courthose, with his young son William, (who was called Clito, or royal heir,) with the earl of Montaigne and all the nobles of their party, were taken prisoners, at the decisive battle of Tinchebray, which was fought on the vigil of St. Michael, exactly forty years after the famous battle of Hastings. The English were much elated at this circumstance, whereby they flattered their national pride with the idea, that the husband of their beloved queen, of Saxon lineage, had wiped away the dishonour of the Norman conquest, by subjugating Normandy to the yoke of England.<sup>1</sup> Edgar Atheling, Matilda's uncle, was taken fighting for his friend Robert of Normandy, besides four hundred valiant knights.<sup>2</sup> Henry instantly released the aged prince, for love of the queen his niece, say some of the chroniclers of that period, and at her intercession settled a pension upon him for life.

Henry, now at the summit of his ambition, having verified the death-bed prediction of his father, the Conqueror, that he should unite in his own person the inheritance of both his brothers, returned triumphantly to England with his unfortunate captives. Robert he sent to Cardiff Castle, where for a time his confinement was only a sort of honourable restraint—at least, if we may credit the account which Henry himself gives of it, in a letter to the pope; as follows:

"I have not," says he, "imprisoned him as an enemy; but I have placed him in a royal castle, as a noble stranger broke down with many troubles, and I supply him abundantly with every delicacy and enjoyment."

Henry and Matilda kept their Easter this year at Bath, and, during the summer, introduced the popular custom of making a royal progress through different parts of England.<sup>3</sup>

The following year Henry and Matilda kept court, for the first time, at New Windsor, then called, from the picturesque winding of the river Thames, Windlesore.

<sup>1</sup> Saxon Annals.

<sup>2</sup> W. Malmesbury.

<sup>3</sup> Saxon Chronicle.

This beautiful retreat was originally used as a hunting-seat by William the Conqueror, who, for better security of his person, converted it into a fortress or castle; but the extensive alterations and improvements which the elegant tastes of the Beauclerc sovereign and his accomplished consort Matilda of Scotland effected, first gave to Windsor Castle the magnificent and august character, as a royal residence, which has rendered it ever since a favourite abode with succeeding sovereigns.

In the year 1108, the affairs of Normandy requiring the presence of the king, another temporary separation took place between Matilda and her royal lord. Indeed, from the time that the duchy of Normandy was subjected to his sway, it became a matter of necessity, in order to preserve his popularity with his continental subjects, to pass a considerable portion of his time among them. Meanwhile the peace and integral prosperity of England were best promoted by the presence of Matilda, who formed the bond of union between Henry of Normandy and the Saxon race. Therefore it appears to have been a measure of political expediency for her to remain, with her splendid court, at Westminster or London, endearing herself daily more and more to the people, by her works of princely charity, and the public benefits which she was constantly labouring to promote. Thus we see, on accurate examination, that, contrary to the assertions of one or two paradoxical writers, who have assumed that Matilda was not treated with the affection and respect that were her due in wedded life, she enjoyed a degree of power and influence in the state, perfectly unknown to the Saxon queens.

Matilda was so nobly dowered withal, that in after reigns the highest demand ever made on the part of a queen-consort was, that she should be endowed with a dower equal to that of Matilda of Scotland.<sup>1</sup>

By close examination of the earliest authorities, we find, that the first parliaments held by the Anglo-Norman dynasty, were the fruits of the virtuous influence of this excellent queen over the mind of her husband. But as the fact that parliaments were ever held before the reigns of Henry III. and Edward I. has been a point of great contest among modern historians, we feel it indispensable to bring forward our proofs, first, that parliaments were held; and next, that they were held through the influence of Matilda. The earliest historian who wrote in English, Robert of Gloucester, declares of Henry I.<sup>2</sup>

“When his daughter was ten years old, to council there he drew,  
On a Whitsunday, a great parliament he *name* (held)  
At Westminster noble enow, that much folk came.”<sup>3</sup>

The other fact is proved by Piers of Langtoft, a parallel historian, who wrote in French, and, with the most minute detail, points out the classes of whom Matilda advised Henry to take counsel—viz., barons, lords of towns, and burgesses. Here are the lines :

<sup>1</sup> Tyrrell.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. ii., p. 430. The edition is royal octavo.

<sup>3</sup> Robert of Gloucester died before he completed the reign of Henry III.; consequently, if the first parliaments were held in that of Edward I., he could not even have mentioned such legislative assemblies without possessing the gift of prophecy.

"Mald the good queen gave him in council  
 To love all his folks and leave all his *turpeile*, (disputing,)  
 To bear him with his barons that held of him their fees, (feofs,)  
 And to lords of towns and burgesses of cities :  
 Through council of Dame Mald, a kind woman and true,  
 Instead of hatred old, there now was love all new ;  
 Now love they full well the barons and the king,  
 The king does ilk a deal at their bidding."

Robert of Gloucester, from first to last, speaks of queen Matilda as an active agent in the government of England, and the restorer and upholder of the Saxon form of legislature, whose system was that of a representative constitution. He says,

"The goodness that king Henry and the good queen Mold  
 Did to this land ne may never be told."

The year 1109 must have been an era of eventful interest to Matilda. Her royal husband, having spent the winter and spring in Normandy,<sup>1</sup> returned to England in the summer, to visit her and their infant family, and kept court with uncommon splendour, in his new palace at Windsor, which had been completed in his absence. It was there that he received the ambassadors who came to solicit the hand of the princess Matilda for the emperor Henry V.<sup>2</sup> The proposal was eagerly accepted by Henry Beauclerc; and the princess, then just turned of five years old, was solemnly espoused, by proxy, to her royal suitor, who was forty years her senior; but, on account of her tender age, the infant bride was allowed for the present to remain under the care of the queen her mother.<sup>3</sup>

About the same period Alexander the Fierce of Scotland, Matilda's brother, condescended to wed Isabella, the youngest illegitimate daughter of his sister's husband. His motives for contracting this alliance are difficult to imagine, since the young lady was remarkable for the plainness of her person and the impropriety of her conduct.<sup>4</sup>

The fact that Henry's numerous illegitimate children were many of them adults at this period, proves that they were born in his youth, and at all events before his marriage with Matilda of Scotland.

In the year 1109, the mighty Norman chief Fitz-Haymon, lord of Glamorgan, dying without sons, left the lady Aimabel, his young heiress, to the guardianship of the king. Henry, wishing to secure so rich a prize for his eldest natural son Robert, proposed him to his fair ward, as a suitable husband for her. But the haughty Norman damsel, though only sixteen, intrepidly replied, "That the ladies of her house were not accustomed to wed nameless persons."

Then the king answered, "Neither shalt thou, damsel; for I will give my son a fair name, by which he and his sons shall be called. Robert Fitzroy shall be his name henceforth."

"But," objected the prudent heiress of Glamorgan, "a name so given is nothing. Where are the lands, and what the lordship, of the man you will me to wed, sire?"

<sup>1</sup> Saxon Annals.    <sup>2</sup> M. Paris. Huntingdon.    <sup>3</sup> M. Paris.    <sup>4</sup> W. Malmesbury.

"Truly," responded the king, with a smile, "thy question is a shrewd one, damsel: I will endow my son Robert with the lands and honours of Gloucester, and by that title shall he henceforth be called."

The lady Aimabel made no further demur, we are told, but wedded the king's son without delay. The fact was, the king was generously bestowing upon his son Robert the lands and honours which had been granted or sold to Fitz-Haymon, her deceased father, by William Rufus, once the patrimony of the luckless Brihtric Meaw,<sup>1</sup> and the young lady, who seems to have been gifted with no ordinary share of worldly wisdom, thought, no doubt, that she had better hold the lands and honours of Gloucester on the tenure of wife-service to the king's son, than lose them altogether. Such were the dealings of the Anglo-Norman sovereigns with their wards. The high-spirited heiress of Fitz-Haymon was, however, fortunate in the marriage that was thus arranged for her by her royal guardian. Robert Fitzroy was the princely earl of Gloucester who so valiantly upheld the title of his half-sister, the empress Matilda, to the English crown, in the succeeding reign.

The following year, an enormous tax, of three shillings on every hide of land, was levied, to pay the portion of the princess Matilda, by which the sum of 824,000*l.* was raised; and the princess was sent over to her imperial husband with a magnificent retinue: she was espoused to him in the cathedral of Mentz,<sup>2</sup> and solemnly crowned by the archbishop of Cologne.

Queen Matilda was in the next year left to keep court alone, in consequence of a formidable insurrection in Normandy, in favour of William Clito, son of the unfortunate Robert Courthose, which was privately fomented by the earl of Flanders. King Henry, perceiving that all classes of his continental subjects were averse to the yoke of an absent sovereign, considered it expedient to forego the society of his queen and their children, for a period of nearly two years, while he held his separate state in Normandy.

In the year 1112, we find the king and queen<sup>3</sup> were together at Winchester, with their court, where they personally assisted at the removal of the bodies of Alfred the Great, and his queen Alswitha, from the ruinous chapel of Newminster, close to Winchester Cathedral, to the magnificent abbey of Hyde,<sup>4</sup> founded and endowed by Henry and Matilda, as a more suitable shrine for the relics of their illustrious progenitor,—from whom, be it remembered, Henry, as well as his Saxon queen, was descended in the eighth generation, through the marriage of Elstrith, the daughter of Alfred, with an earl of Flanders, his maternal ancestor.

Here, too, the bones of Edward the Elder, and his queen, the immediate ancestors of Matilda, were at the same time translated.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See the preceding Biography, and Domesday-book.

<sup>2</sup> Simeon of Durham.

<sup>3</sup> Henry VIII. brutally desecrated the place where reposed the remains of these patriot sovereigns. Englishmen of the eighteenth century, more barbarous still, converted the holy fans into a bridewell, and the bones of Alfred were by felon hands exhumed.

<sup>4</sup> Archæologia.

<sup>5</sup> Archæologia.

The following year Henry was again in Normandy, where he entered into an amicable treaty with one of his most troublesome enemies, Fulk earl of Anjou, by a matrimonial alliance between his heir, prince William, and Alice, the daughter of that earl.

The education of Matilda's eldest daughter being considered as completed in 1114, the marriage was fully solemnized between her and the emperor Henry V., and they were both crowned a second time, with great pomp, in the cathedral at Mentz. The young empress was then only in her twelfth year. Notwithstanding this great disparity in age, it appears that the youthful bride enjoyed a reasonable share of happiness with her mature consort, by whom she was treated with the greatest indulgence, while her great beauty and majestic carriage won the hearts of the German princes, and obtained for her unbounded popularity.

Matilda's eldest son, prince William, (or the Atheling, as he was more generally styled by the English,) was, in the year 1115, conducted by the king his father with great pomp into Normandy, where he was presented to the states as the heir of the duchy, and fealty was sworn to him by the barons and freemen. This prince was then only twelve years old. He returned with his royal father to England in July, and the following year Henry summoned that memorable parliament mentioned by Holinshed, as the first held since the Norman conquest, to meet at Salisbury, and there appointed the young prince as his successor. William of Malmsbury says, "Every freeman of England and Normandy, of whatsoever degree, or to whatsoever lord his vassal service was due, was made to perform homage, and swear fealty to William, son of king Henry and queen Matilda." The Easter festival was kept this year by the royal family at Odiham Castle, in Hampshire.

Matilda passed the Christmas festival of the same year, in the company of her royal husband, at the abbey of St. Alban's.<sup>1</sup> They were the guests of abbot Richard, who had then brought to a happy conclusion the building of that magnificent fabric. He invited the queen, who was one of its benefactresses, the king, and the archbishop of Rouen, and many prelates and nobles, to assist at the consecration of the abbey, which took place Christmas-day, 1115. The royal pair, with their suite of nobles and ladies, were lodged in the abbey, and entertained from December 25th to January 6th. The queen, sanctioned by Henry, gave, by charter, two manors to St. Alban's. The existence of a portrait of queen Matilda is certainly owing to this visit; for in a rich illuminated volume, called the Golden Book of St. Alban's, (now in the British Museum,) may still be seen a miniature of the royal benefactress.<sup>2</sup> The queen is attired in the royal mantle of scarlet, lined with

<sup>1</sup> Newcome's History of St. Alban's, pp. 52, 93.

<sup>2</sup> Cottonian MSS. Nero D. 7. A beautiful and accurate copy from the original has been drawn by M. Kearney at the expense of Henry Howard, Esq., of Corby, the descendant of Matilda, and presented by him to the authors of this work. It corrects, in many particulars, the errors of an engraving published by Strutt. We have the opportunity, in this second edition, of describing Matilda's portrait, from an examination of the Golden Book itself. The Golden Book of

white fur; it covers the knees, and is very long. The mantle is square to the bust. A cordon of scarlet and gold, with a large tassel, passes through two gold knobs: she holds the cordon in her left hand. She wears a tight kirtle of dark blue, buttoned down the front with gold. Her sleeves fit close to the arms, and are scarlet like the mantle. A white veil is arranged in a square form on the brow, and is surmounted by a gold crown, formed of three large trefoils, and gold *oreillettes* appear beneath the veil, on each side of the cheeks. The veil flows behind her shoulders with lappets. Matilda is very fair in complexion: she has a long throat, and elegant form, of tall proportions. She displays with her right hand the charter she gave the abbey, from which hangs a very large red seal, whereon, without doubt, was impressed her effigy in grand relief. She sits on a carved stone bench, on which is a scarlet cushion figured with gold leaves. This cushion is in the form of a woolpack, but has four tassels of gold and scarlet. A piece of figured cloth is hung at the back of her seat. There are no armorial bearings — one proof of the authenticity of the portrait. “Queen Matildis gave us Bellwick and Lilleburn,” is the notation appended by the monks of St. Alban’s to this portrait.

About this period, the stately new palace at Woodstock being completed, and the noble park, reckoned the finest at that time in England, having been walled round, Henry stocked it with a curious menagerie of wild beasts, the first zoological collection ever seen in this country. It is described in very quaint terms by Stowe, who says, “The king craved from other kings lions, leopards, lynxes, and camels, and other curious beasts, of which England hath none. Among others, there was a strange animal called a stryx, or porcupine, sent him by William of Montpelier; which beast,” says the worthy chronicler, “is, among the Africans, counted as a kind of hedgehog, covered with pricking bristles, which they shoot out naturally on the dogs that pursue them.”

Unbounded hospitality was one of the social virtues of this peaceful

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St. Alban’s is a sort of conventual album, in which were entered the portraits of all the benefactors of the abbey, together with an abstract of their donations. Five different artists, of various degrees of merit, may be traced in this collection. Some of the miniatures are exquisitely designed and coloured, others are barbarous and puerile in their execution; some of the portraits are represented holding well-filled purses, others displaying the charters, with large pendent seals, which secured broad lands to church and poor. It is true, that Matilda’s portrait was not entered till the fourteenth century, when the book was first commenced; but the style of dress, together with the form of the throne on which the queen is seated, prove that the original design was drawn in the queen’s own day; for the artists of the middle ages drew only what they saw; and had the limner been inclined to give a supposititious portrait of queen Matilda, he would have designed her figure clad in the costume of Edward the Third’s era, and seated in the high-backed Gothic chair of state on which royal persons were enthroned since the days of Edward the First, as may be seen by reference to any collection of engravings from regal seals; instead of which, Matilda is seen seated on the primitive stone bench of Anglo-Saxon royalty, represented on the seals of the Anglo-Norman and early Plantagenet monarchs.



reign,<sup>1</sup> especially at this peculiar era, when the benignant example of the good queen had, for a period of nearly seventeen years, produced the happiest effect in softening the manners of the haughty and powerful Norman families, who were at that time the magnates of the land.

The Norman families, at this period, were beginning to practise some of the peaceful pursuits of the Anglo-Saxons, and ladies of high rank considered it no infringement on the dignity of their station to attend to the profitable concerns of the poultry-yard and the dairy. The countess Constance of Chester, though the wife of Hugh Lupus, the king's first cousin, kept a herd of kine, and made good Cheshire cheeses, three of which she presented to the archbishop of Canterbury. Giraldus Cambriensis bears honourable testimony to the excellence of the produce of the cheese-shire in that day.

A fresh revolt in Normandy<sup>2</sup> deprived Matilda of the society of her husband and son in 1117. The king, according to Eadmer, returned and spent Christmas with her, as she was at that time in a declining state of health;<sup>3</sup> leaving prince William with his Norman baronage, as a pledge for his return.<sup>4</sup> His sojourn was, of necessity, very brief. He was compelled, by the distracted state of affairs in Normandy, to rejoin his army there, and Matilda never saw either her husband or her son again.

Resigned and perfect in all the duties of her high calling, the dying queen remained, during this trying season, in her palace at Westminster,<sup>5</sup> lonely, though surrounded with all the splendour of royalty; enduring with complacency and patience the separation from her beloved consort and children, and affording, to the last hour of her life, a beautiful example of piety and self-denial.

She expired on the 1st of May, 1118,<sup>6</sup> passionately lamented by every class of the people, to whom her virtues and wisdom had rendered her inexpressibly dear.

According to the most ancient chroniclers, the king her husband was much afflicted when the intelligence of Matilda's death reached him, amidst the turmoil of battle and siege in Normandy.<sup>7</sup>

Piers of Langtoft alludes to the grief felt by the royal widower, at the loss of his amiable consort, in terms of the most homely simplicity:—

“Now is the king sorry, her death doth him *gram*” (grieve).

Hardinge's rhyming chronicle produces the following quaint stanzas on the death of Matilda, and the sorrow of king Henry for her loss:—

<sup>1</sup>The following verses from an ancient MS., quoted by Collins, afford an interesting witness of this fact. They were inscribed by sir William Fitz-William, the lord of Sprotborough, on an ancient cross which was demolished at the Reformation:—

“Whoso is hungry, and lists well to eat,  
Let him come to Sprotborough to his meat,  
And for a night and a day  
His horse shall have both corn and hay,  
And no one shall ask him; ‘when he goeth away?’”

Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>2</sup>Eadmer, p. 118; see Rapin, vol. i. 199.

<sup>3</sup>Saxon Annals.

<sup>4</sup>Saxon Annals.

<sup>5</sup>William of Malmesbury.

<sup>6</sup>Robert Gloucester.

"The year of Christ a thousand was full clear,  
 One hundred eke and therewithal eighteen,  
 When good queen Maude was dead and laid on bier,  
 At Westminster buryed, as well was seen;  
 For heaviness of which, the king I ween,  
 To Normandy then went with his son,  
 The duke William, and there with him did won."

Hardinge is, however, mistaken in supposing that Henry was with his beloved consort at the time of her decease.

The same chronicler gives us another stanza on the death of Henry, in which he, in yet more positive terms, speaks of the conjugal affection which united the Norman sovereign to his Saxon queen :

"Of Christe's date was there a thousand year,  
 One hundred also, and nine and thirty mo,  
 Buryed at Redynge, as well it doth appear,  
 In the abbye which there he founded so,  
 Of monkes black, whenever they ride or go,  
 That pray for him and queen Maude his wife,  
 Who either other loved withouten strife."

Another chronicler says, "Nothing happened to trouble the king, save the death of his queen Matilda, the very mirror of piety, humility, and princely bounty."<sup>1</sup>

The same causes that had withheld the king from attending Matilda in her dying illness prevented him from honouring her obsequies with his presence. Matilda was buried on St. Philip's day in Westminster abbey, on the right side of her royal uncle, Edward the Confessor.<sup>2</sup> Great disputes, however, have existed as to the place of her interment,<sup>3</sup> which has been contested with almost as much zeal as was displayed by the seven cities of Greece, in claiming the honour of having given birth to Homer. The monks of Reading averred that their royal patroness was buried in her own stately abbey there, where her illustrious consort was afterwards interred. The rhyming chroniclers insist that she was buried in St. Paul's cathedral, and that her epitaph was placed in Westminster abbey. These are the words of Piers of Langtoft :—

"At London, in St. Paul's, in tomb she is laid,  
 Christ, then, of her soul have mercie.  
 If any one will *witten* (know) of her storie,  
 At Westminster it is written *readily*."

That is to say, so that it may be plainly read.

Tyrrell declares that she was buried at Winchester, but that tablets to her memory were set up in many churches,—an honour, which she shares with queen Elizabeth.

The following passage from the learned and faithful antiquary, Weever, expressly indicates that it was his opinion that the mortal remains of Matilda, "the Good Queen," repose near the relics of her royal uncle, Edward the Confessor, in the solemn temple founded by

<sup>1</sup> Florence of Worcester.

<sup>2</sup> Pennant's London. Robert of Gloucester.

<sup>3</sup> According to Stowe, her grave was in the vestry of the abbey.

that last Saxon monarch, and which had been completed under her careful superintendence. "Here lieth in Westminster abbey, without any tomb, Matilda or Maud, daughter of Malcolm Canmore, king of Scots, and wife of Henry I. of England, who brought to him children, William, Richard, and Mary, who perished by shipwreck, and likewise Maud, who was wife to Henry, the fifth emperor. She died the first day of May, 1118."<sup>1</sup> She had an excellent epigram made to her commendation, whereof these four verses only remain :

"Prospera non laetam fecere, nec aspera tristem,  
Aspera risus erant, prospera terror erant ;  
Non decor efficit fragilem, non sceptrum superbam,  
Sola potens humilis, sola pudica decens."

Henry of Huntingdon, the chronicler, no mean poet, was the author of these Latin lines. From the numerous translations extant of this beautiful epitaph, we select the following exquisite lines, which come very close to the original, and afford a lovely portrait of the feminine graces of this admirable queen.

"Success ne'er sat exulting in her eye,  
Nor disappointment caused the frequent sigh ;  
Beauty nor made her vain, nor sceptre proud,  
Nor titles taught to scorn the meaner crowd ;  
Supreme humility was awful grace,  
And her best charm a bashfulness of face."

Matilda died in the eighteenth year of her marriage, and about the forty-first of her age. Her favourite residence was the royal palace of the Saxon kings at Westminster, where, with occasional visits to New Windsor, Winchester, and Woodstock, and other places in which the king her husband thought proper to hold his courts, she passed the greater portion of her wedded life.

Many curious remains still exist of the old palace in Westminster, where Matilda kept state as queen, and ended her life. This venerable abode of our early sovereigns, was originally built by Canute, and, being devastated by fire, was rebuilt by Edward the Confessor, with such enduring solidity, that antiquaries still point out different portions, which were indubitably the work of the royal Saxon, and therefore must have formed part of the residence of his great niece. Part of the old palace of Westminster is still to be seen, in the buildings near Cotton-garden, and the lancet-shaped windows about Old Palace Yard are declared to appertain to it.<sup>2</sup> Cotton-garden was the private garden of the ancient palace, and therefore belonged especially to queen Matilda. It would be idle to dwell on Westminster Hall and Westminster Abbey, though the original sites of both were included in the precincts of this palace, because one was rebuilt from the ground by Richard II., and the other by Henry III. Great devastation was made in the royal abode of the Anglo-Saxon queen, by the late disastrous conflagration of the House of Lords and its adjacent apartments, which all belonged to it.

<sup>1</sup> Weever's Funeral Monuments.

<sup>2</sup> Pennant.

The House of Lords was an antique oblong room; it was the hall of state of Matilda's palace; it was called *the white-hall*, but without any reference to the vast palace of Whitehall, to which the seat of English royalty was transferred in the reign of Henry VIII. As the Painted Chamber, still entire, is well known to have been the bedchamber of Edward the Confessor, and the apartment in which he expired,<sup>1</sup> there can be no doubt but that it was the state bedchamber of his niece. A curious room in Cotton House was the private oratory of the Confessor, and was assuredly used by Matilda for the same purpose; while at the south end of the Court of Requests are to be seen two mighty Saxon arches, the zig-zag work of which indicates that its architecture is the most ancient in our country. This was once a deserted state-chamber<sup>2</sup> of the royal Saxon palace; but it has been used lately by the House of Commons.

There is a statue of Matilda in Rochester cathedral, which forms the pilaster to the west door; that of king Henry, her husband, forms another. The hair of the queen depends over either shoulder, in two long plaits, below the knees. Her garments are long and flowing, and she holds an open scroll of parchment in her hand.

King Henry proved the sincerity of his regard for Matilda, by confirming all her charters after her death. Madox, in his History of the Exchequer, quotes one of that monarch's charters, reciting "that he had confirmed to the Priory of the Holy Trinity in London the grant of his queen Matilda, for the good of her soul, of 25*l.*, on the farm of the city of Exeter, and commands his chief justiciar and the barons of his exchequer to constrain the sheriff of Devonshire to pay the same to the said canons."<sup>3</sup>

Matilda's household was chiefly composed of Saxon ladies, if we may trust the evidence of Christian names. The maids of honour were Emma, Gunilda, and Christina, pious ladies, and full of alms-deeds, like their royal mistress. After the death of the queen, these ladies retired to the hermitage of Kilburn, near London, where there was a holy well, or medicinal spring. This was changed into a priory<sup>4</sup> in 1128, as the deed says, "for the reception of these three virgins of God, sacred damsels who had belonged to the chamber of Matilda, the good queen-consort to Henry I."<sup>5</sup>

History only particularizes two surviving children of Matilda of Scot-

<sup>1</sup> Howell.

<sup>2</sup> The appellation of Court of Requests has no reference to modern legal proceedings. It was the feudal court of the High Steward of England. It is used by the House of Commons since the destruction of St. Stephen's Chapel, while the Lords have taken possession of the Painted Chamber.

<sup>3</sup> Charter Antiq. N. n. 16.

<sup>4</sup> On its site are a public-house and tea-gardens, now called Kilburn Wells.

<sup>5</sup> The original deed, preserved in the Cottonian MSS., Claudius A. says of these maids of honour—"Tres virgines Deo sacratas domicellas, videlicet, camere Matildis bone regine Consortis regis Henrici primi." The term *domicella* proves their rank was noble, as this term will be seen applied even to the daughters of emperors.

land and Henry I.; but Gervase, the monk of Canterbury, says she had, besides William and the empress Matilda, a son named Richard. Hector Boethius mentions a daughter of hers, named Euphemia. The Saxon Chronicle and Robert of Gloucester both speak of her second son Richard. Piers of Langtoft says, "The two princes, her sons, were both in Normandy when Matilda died;" and Hardinge says she had two sons, William and Richard.

Prince William never returned to England after the death of his royal mother. During the remainder of the year 1118, he was fighting by his father's side, against the invading force of the king of France, and the partisans of his cousin William Clito. On one occasion, when the noble war-horse and its rich caparisons, belonging to that gallant but unfortunate prince, having been abandoned during a hasty retreat, were captured, and Henry presented this prize to his darling heir, the noble youth generously sent them back, with a courteous message, to his rival kinsman and namesake.<sup>1</sup>

His royal father, king Henry, did not disdain to imitate the magnanimous conduct of his youthful son, after the memorable battle in which the standard of France was taken: when the favourite charger of Louis le Gros fell into his hands, he returned it to the French monarch the next day.

The king of France, as *suzerain* of Normandy, at the general pacification, required of Henry the customary homage for his fief. This the victorious monarch considered derogatory to the dignity of a king of England to perform, and therefore deputed the office to prince William, who was then invested with the duchy, and received the oath of fealty from the states.<sup>2</sup> The prince solemnly espoused his betrothed bride Alice, the daughter of Fulk, earl of Anjou, June 1119. King Henry called her Matilda, out of respect, it is said, for the memory of his mother, but more probably from a tender regard for his deceased consort, Matilda of Scotland, the love of his youth, and the mother of his children. The marriage was celebrated at Lisieux,<sup>3</sup> in the county of Burgundy; and the prince remained in Normandy with his young bride, attended by all the youthful nobility of England and the duchy, passing the time gaily with feasts and pageants, till the 25th of November, in the year 1120; when king Henry (who had been nearly two years absent from his kingdom) conducted prince William, with his retinue, to Barfleur,<sup>4</sup> for the purpose of embarking for England. The king and his train set sail the same night, leaving the prince to follow in another ship.

Fitz-Stephen, the captain of the *Blanche Nef* (the finest vessel in the Norman navy) demanded the honour of conveying the heir of England home; because his father had commanded the *Mora*, the ship which brought William the Conqueror to the shores of England. His petition was granted; and the prince, with his gay and splendid company, entered the fatal bark with light hearts, and commenced their voyage with mirth and minstrelsy. The prince incautiously ordered three casks of wine to

<sup>1</sup> Holinshed.

<sup>2</sup> Saxon Annals.

<sup>3</sup> Ordericus Vitalis. Tyrrell.

<sup>4</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

be given to the ship's crew; and the sailors were, in consequence, for the most part, intoxicated, when they sailed, about the close of day.

Prince William, who was desirous of overtaking the rest of the fleet, pressed Fitz-Stephen to crowd his sails, and put out his sweeps. Fitz-Stephen, having named the white ship as the swiftest vessel in the world, to make good his boast, and oblige his royal passenger, caused his men to stretch with all their might to the oars, and did everything to accelerate the speed of his light bark. While the *Blanche Nef* was rushing through the water with the most dangerous velocity, she suddenly struck on a rock called the *Catte-raze* with such impetuosity, that she started several planks, and began to sink. All was instant horror, and confusion. The boat was, however, let down; and the young heir of England, with several of his youthful companions, got into it, and having cleared the ship, might have reached the Norman shore in safety; but the cries of his illegitimate sister, Matilda countess of Perche, who distinctly called on him, by name, for succour, occasioning a tender impulse of compassion, he commanded the boat back, to take her in. Unfortunately, the moment it neared the ship, such numbers sprang into it, that it instantly sank with its precious freight, and all on board perished; and of the three hundred persons who embarked in the white ship, but one soul escaped to tell the dismal tale. This person was a poor butcher of Rouen, named Berthould, who climbed to the top of the mast, and was the next morning rescued by some fishermen. Fitz-Stephen, the master of the luckless white ship, was a strong mariner, and stoutly supported himself for some hours in the water, till he saw Berthould on the mast, and calling to him, asked if the boat with the heir of England had escaped; but when the butcher, who had witnessed the whole catastrophe, replied, "that all were drowned and dead," the strong man's force failed him; he ceased to battle with the waves, and sank to rise no more.<sup>1</sup>

The report of this disaster reached England the next day. Theobald of Blois, the king's nephew, was the first who heard it; but he dared not inform his uncle of the calamity which had rendered his house desolate. Besides the heir-apparent of England, prince William, the Saxon chronicler says, there was another son of Henry and Matilda, named Richard, and also Richard, a natural son of the king; Matilda, his natural daughter, countess of Perche; Richard earl of Chester, his cousin, with his bride, the young lady Lucy of Blois, daughter of Henry's sister Adela, and the flower of the juvenile nobility, who are mentioned by the Saxon chronicler as a multitude of "incomparable folk."

King Henry had reached England with his fleet in safety, and for three days was permitted to remain in a state of the most agonizing suspense and uncertainty respecting the fate of his children. No one choosing to become the bearer of such evil tidings, at length Theobald de Blois, finding it could no longer be concealed, instructed a favourite little page to communicate the mournful news to the bereaved father; and the child, entering the royal presence with a sorrowful step, knelt down at

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<sup>1</sup> Thierry's Anglo-Normans.

Henry's feet, and told him that the prince and all on board the white ship were lost. The great Henry was so thunderstruck with this dreadful news, that he staggered and sank upon the floor in a deep swoon, in which state he remained for many hours. When he recovered, he broke into the bitterest lamentations, magnifying at the same time the great qualities of his heir and the loss he had sustained; and the chroniclers all agree that he was never again seen to smile.

It is Henry of Huntingdon who exults so uncharitably over the catastrophe of the white ship, in the following burst of poetic eloquence:—

“The proud youth; he thought of his future reign, when he said he would yoke the Saxons like oxen. But God said, ‘It shall not be, thou impious one, it shall not be:’ and so it has come to pass; that brow has worn no crown of gold, but has been dashed against the rocks of the ocean. It was God himself who would not that the son of the Norman should again see England.”

Brompton also speaks unfavourably of this unfortunate young prince; but it should be remembered that England was a divided nation at that period, and that the Saxon chroniclers wrote in the very gall of bitterness against those whom the Norman historians commended. Implicit credence is not to be given to the assertions of either. It is only by reading both, and carefully weighing and collating facts, that the truth is to be elicited.

In the last act of his life, William Atheling manifested a spirit so noble, so tenderly compassionate, and forgetful of selfish considerations, that we can only say it was worthy of the son of Matilda, the good queen.

The young wife of prince William was left a widow at the early age of twelve years. She was not among the devoted company who sailed in the white ship.<sup>1</sup> Henry I. was much attached to her, but she returned to her father, the earl of Anjou, and remaining constant to the memory of her princely consort, she was veiled a nun at Fontevraud. The body of prince William was never found.

Queen Matilda's only surviving child, the empress Matilda, thus became king Henry's heiress presumptive. She was the first female who claimed the royal office in England. The events of her life are so closely interwoven with those of the two succeeding queens, Adelicia, and Matilda of Boulogne, her contemporaries, that to avoid the tedium of repetition, and also to preserve the chronological stream of history in unbroken unity, which is an important object, we must refer our readers to the Lives and Times of those queens, for the personal history of this princess, from whom her present majesty queen Victoria derives her title to the crown of England.

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<sup>1</sup> She was with king Henry in his ship.

# ADELICIA OF LOUVAINÉ, SURNAMED THE FAIR MAID OF BRABANT; SECOND QUEEN OF HENRY I.

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Adelicia's beauty—Imperial descent from Charlemagne—Standard embroidered by Adelicia—Preserved at Liege—Adelicia sought in marriage by Henry I.—Richly dowered—Embarks for England with Henry—King and queen parishioners of archbishop of Canterbury—Violence of archbishop—He crowns Adelicia—Eulogies on her beauty—Her prudence—Encouragement of literature—Empress Matilda—Adelicia childless—Empress Matilda kept in Adelicia's chamber—Difficult position of the queen—Friendship with her step-daughter—Second marriage of the empress—Adelicia's conjugal virtues—Matilda returns to England—Remains with the queen—Birth of prince Henry—Death of king Henry—Adelicia's respect for his memory—Her troubadour writes king Henry's life—Her second marriage—William Albin—Her dowry—Palace—Receives empress Matilda—Message to king Stephen—Conjugal happiness of Adelicia—Her children—Charitable foundations at Arundel—Her younger brother abbot of Afflighem—Adelicia retires to Afflighem nunnery, in Flanders—Dies there—Record of her death—Buried—Her issue by Albin—Adelicia ancestor of two of our queens.

THIS princess, to whom contemporary chroniclers have given the name of "the fair maid of Brabant," is one of the most obscure characters in the illustrious catalogue of English queens. Tradition, and her hand-maid Poetry, have, however, spoken bright things of her; and the surviving historical records of her life, though brief, are all of a nature tending to confirm the good report which the verses of the Provençals have preserved of her virtues and accomplishments.

Descended, through both her parents, from the imperial Carlovingian line,<sup>1</sup> Adelicia boasted the most illustrious blood in Christendom. She was the eldest daughter of Godfrey of Louvaine, duke of Brabant and Lothier (or Lower Lorraine), and Ida, countess of Namur.<sup>2</sup> Her father, as the great-grandson of Charles, brother to Lothaire of France, was the lawful representative of Charlemagne. The male posterity of the unfortunate Charles having been cut off by Hugh Capet, the rights of his house became vested in the descendants of his eldest daughter, Gerberga.<sup>3</sup> Lambert, the son of Gerberga, by her marriage with Robert of Louvaine, was the father of Godfrey. Ermengarde, the second daughter of Charles, married Albert, the third count of Namur; and their sole daughter and heiress, Ida, (the mother of Adelicia,) became the wife of her cousin, Godfrey of Louvaine, surnamed Barbatous, or the Bearded, because he had made a vow never to shave his beard till he had recovered Lower

<sup>1</sup> Howard Memorials.

<sup>2</sup> Betham's Genealogical Tables. Bucknet's Trophies of Brabant. Howard's Memorials of the Howard Family.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



Lorraine, the patrimony of his ancestors. In this he succeeded in the year 1107, after which he triumphantly displayed a smooth chin, in token that he had fulfilled his obligation, and finally obtained from his subjects and contemporaries the more honourable appellation of Godfrey the Great.<sup>1</sup> The dominions of this prince were somewhat more extensive than the modern kingdom of Belgium, and were governed by him with the greatest wisdom and ability.

From this illustrious lineage Adelia appears to have inherited the distinguished beauty and fine talents for which the Lorraine branch of the house of Charlemagne has ever been celebrated. She was also remarkable for her proficiency in feminine acquirements. A standard which she embroidered in silk and gold for her father, during the arduous contest in which he was engaged for the recovery of his patrimony, was celebrated throughout Europe for the exquisite taste and skill displayed by the royal Adelia in the design and execution of her patriotic achievement.<sup>2</sup> This standard was unfortunately captured at a battle near the castle of Duras, in the year 1129, by the bishop of Liege and the earl of Limbourg, the old competitor of Godfrey for Lower Lorraine, placed by them, as a memorial of their triumph, in the great church of St. Lambert, at Liege, and was for centuries carried in procession, on Rogation days, through the streets of that city. The church of St. Lambert was destroyed during the French Revolution; yet the learned editor of the Howard Memorials fondly indulges in the hope that this interesting relic of his royal ancestress's feminine skill and patriotic feelings may be still in existence, and destined, perhaps, hereafter to be brought to light, like the long-forgotten Bayeux tapestry. The plain, where this memorable trophy was taken, is still called the field of the Standard.<sup>3</sup>

The fame of the fair maid of Brabant's charms and accomplishments, it is said, induced the confidential advisers of Henry I. of England to recommend their sorrow-stricken lord to wed her, in hopes of dissipating that corroding melancholy which, since the loss of his children in the fatal white ship, had become constitutional to him. The temper of this monarch had, in fact, grown so irascible, that his greatest nobles feared to enter his presence, and it is said that, in his causeless transports of rage, he indulged himself in the use of the most unkingly terms of vituperation to all who approached him;<sup>4</sup> which made his peers the more earnest in their counsels for him to take a second wife. Adelia of Louvaine was the object of his choice. Henry's ostensible motive in contracting this marriage was the hope of male posterity, to inherit the united realms of England and Normandy. He had been a widower two years, when he entered into a treaty with Godfrey of Louvaine for the hand of his beautiful daughter.

Robert of Gloucester, when recording the fact in his rhyming chronicle, says,

"He knew no woman so fair as she  
Was seen on middle earth."

<sup>1</sup> Bucknet's Trophies. Howard Memorials.

<sup>2</sup> Memoirs of the Howard Family. Bucknet's Trophies of Brabant.

<sup>3</sup> Brutsholme.

<sup>4</sup> Speed. Rapin.

The name of this princess has been variously written by the chroniclers of England, Normandy, Germany, and Brabant, as Adeliza, Alicia, Adelaide, Aleyda or Adelheite, which means most noble. In the Saxon Chronicle she is called Æthelice, or Alice.

Mr. Howard of Corby Castle, the immediate descendant of this queen, in his "Memorials of the Howard Family,"<sup>1</sup> calls her Adelicia for the best of reasons—her name is so written in an original charter of the 31st of Henry I., confirming her grant of lands for the foundation of an hospital of lepers at Fugglestone, near Wilton, dedicated to St. Giles; which deed, with part of the seal appendant, is still preserved in the corporation chest at Wilton.

The Provençal and Walloon poets, of whom this queen was a munificent patroness, style her *Alix la Belle*, *Adelais*, and *Alise*, varying the syllables according to the structure of the verses which they composed in her honour—a licence always allowed to poetical writers; therefore, the rhymes of the troubadours ought not to be regarded as the slightest authority in settling the point. Modern historians generally speak of this princess by her Latinized name of *Adeliza*, but her learned descendant's version of her name is that which ought to be adopted by her biographer.

There is no authentic record of the date of Adelicia's birth. Mr. Howard supposes she was about eighteen years old at the period of her marriage with Henry I., and it is certain that she was in the bloom of her beauty at the time he sought her hand.

In proportion to the estimation in which the charms of Adelicia were held, did Henry fix her dower, which was so munificent that the duke of Louvaine, her father, scrupled not to consign her to her affianced lord, as soon as the contract of marriage was signed.

This ceremony took place on the 16th of April, 1120, but the nuptials were not celebrated till some months after this period. King Henry, in person, conducted his betrothed bride to England, in the autumn of this year.<sup>2</sup> They landed about Michaelmas, and, according to some historians, the royal pair were married at Ely, soon after their arrival; but if so, it must have been a private arrangement, for the nuptials were publicly solemnized at Windsor, on the 24th of January, 1121;<sup>3</sup> having been delayed in consequence of a singular dispute between the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishop of Salisbury, which established a point too important to be omitted in a history, embracing, in a peculiar manner, the habits and customs of royalty.

Roger le Poer, the bishop of Salisbury, that notable preacher of short sermons, claimed the right to marry the royal pair, because the fortress of Windsor was within his diocese. This right was disputed by the aged Ralph, archbishop of Canterbury, who was a great stickler for the prerogatives of his office; and an ecclesiastical council was called, in

<sup>1</sup>Through the courtesy of his grace the duke of Norfolk, I have been favoured with a copy of this inestimable volume, which, as it is printed for private use, is inaccessible to the public, but is most important as a book of reference to the writers of royal and noble biographies.

<sup>2</sup>Henry of Huntingdon. White Kennet.

<sup>3</sup>Eadmer.

which it was decided, that wherever the king and queen might be within the realm of England, they were the parishioners of the archbishop of Canterbury. Accordingly, the ceremony was triumphantly performed by the venerable primate, though bowed down by so many infirmities, that he appeared like one tottering on the verge of the grave.

This afforded Henry an excuse for deputing the honour of crowning him and his fair young bride on the following day, at Westminster, to his favourite prelate, Roger le Poer, the bishop of Salisbury, above named, to console him for his disappointment with regard to the hymeneal office. But the archbishop was not thus to be put off. The right of crowning the king and queen he considered a still more important branch of his archiepiscopal prerogatives than that of marrying them, and, *malgré* his age and paralysis, he hastened to the abbey, where the ceremonial had commenced at an unusually early hour. Roger le Poer having, according to his old custom, made unprecedented expedition in the performance of his office, had already placed the royal diadem on the monarch's brow, when archbishop Ralph sternly approached the royal chair, and asked Henry, "Who had put the crown on his head?"<sup>1</sup>

The king evasively replied, "If the ceremony had not been properly performed, it could be done again." On which, as some chroniclers assert, the choleric old primate gave the king such a smart blow with his crosier, that he smote the crown from his head;<sup>2</sup> but Eadmer says, he only raised it up by the strap which passed under the chin, and so turned it off his head. He then proceeded to replace it with all due form, and afterwards crowned the fair young queen. This most extraordinary coronation took place on Sunday, January 30th, 1121.

The beauty of the royal bride, whom Piers of Langtoft calls

"The May withouten vice,"

made a great impression on the minds of the people, which the sweetness of her manners, her prudence, and mild virtues, strengthened in no slight degree. It was on the occasion of her bridal coronation that Henry of Huntingdon, the chronicler, addressed to Adelicia those celebrated Latin verses, of which Camden has given us the following translation:—<sup>3</sup>

"When Adeliza's name should grace my song,  
A sudden wonder stops the muse's tongue;  
Your crown and jewels, when compared to you,  
How poor your crown, how pale your jewels show!

<sup>1</sup> Eadmer. Speed.

<sup>2</sup> Speed.

<sup>3</sup> "Anglerum regina, tuos Adeliza, decores,  
Ipsa referre parans musa stupore regit.  
Quid diadema tibi pulcherrima? Quid tibi gemma?  
Pallet gemma tibi, nec diadema nitet.  
De me tibi cultus, cultum natura ministrat:  
Non esornari forma beata potest,  
Ornamenta cava, nec quicquam luminis inde  
Accipis; illa micant lumine clara tuo;  
Non pudit modicas de magnis dicere laudes,  
Nec pudeat Dominum, te precor, esse meam."

Take off your robes, your rich attire remove;  
 Such pomps may load you, but can ne'er improve;  
 In vain your costly ornaments are worn,  
 You they obscure, while others they adorn.  
 Ah! what new lustres can these trifles give,  
 Which all their beauty from your charms receive?  
 Thus I your lofty praise, your vast renown,  
 In lowly verse am not ashamed to have shown,  
 Oh, be you not ashamed my services to own!"

The wisdom of this lovely girl-queen early manifested itself in the graceful manner by which she endeavoured to conform herself to the tastes of her royal lord, in the encouragement of the polished arts, and the patronage of literature. Henry's love for animals had induced him to create an extensive menagerie at Woodstock, as we have seen, during the life of his first queen, Matilda of Scotland, who was probably well acquainted with natural history. The youthful Adelia evidently knew nothing of zoology previously to her marriage with Henry Beauclerc; but, like a good wife, in order to adapt herself to his pursuits, she turned her attention to that study; for we find Philippe de Thuan wrote a work on the nature of animals for her special instruction. The poetical naturalist did not forget to allude to the personal charms of his royal patroness in his courtier-like dedication.

"Philippe de Thuan, en françoise raison,  
 Ad estrait bestaire un livre de grammaire,  
 Pour l'our d'une feme ki mult est belle,  
 Alix est namée, reine est coronée,  
 Reine est d'Engleterre, sa ame nait ja guere."

"Philippe de Thuan, in plain French,  
 Has written an elementary book of animals,  
 For the praise and instruction of a good and beautiful woman,  
 Who is the crowned queen of England, and named Alix."

One of the most approved historians of her day, the author of the *Waltham Abbey Manuscripts*,<sup>1</sup> states of himself, that he was appointed a canon of Waltham Abbey, through the patronage of queen Adelia. This chronicler is the same person who has so eloquently described the dismal search made for Harold's body, after the battle of Hastings.

Adelia was deprived of the society of her royal husband a few weeks after their marriage, in consequence of a formidable inbreak of the Welsh, who had entered Cheshire, and committed great ravages. Henry went in person to the defence of his border counties, and having defeated the invaders, pursued them far into the country.

During this campaign his life was in some peril, while separated from the main body of his troops, in a narrow defile among the mountains, where he fell into an ambush, and at the same time an arrow, which was aimed at him from the heights above, struck him on the breast, but rebounded from his armour of proof. Henry, who probably did not give his Cambrian foes credit for that skill in archery for which his

<sup>1</sup> See Cottonian MSS. Julius D. S. See note, p. 50.

Norman followers were famed, intimated his suspicions of treachery among his own people, by exclaiming, "By our Lord's death, it was no Welsh hand that shot that arrow!"<sup>1</sup>

This narrow escape, or, perhaps, a wish of returning to Adelia at Westminster, induced the king to conclude a peace with the Welsh. A very brief season of domestic intercourse was, however, permitted to the royal pair. Fulk, earl of Anjou, having espoused his younger daughter, Sybil, to William Clito, the earls of Mellent and Montfort, with a considerable party of the baronage of Normandy, openly declared themselves in favour of that prince, the heir of their lawful duke, Robert Courthose.

Henry I. was keeping the Easter festival, with his beautiful young queen, at Winchester, when the news that Fulk of Anjou had joined this formidable confederacy reached him. He sailed for Normandy in April 1123; and Adelia was left, as her predecessor, Matilda of Scotland, had often been before her, to hold her lonely courts during the protracted absence of her royal consort, and to exert herself for the preservation of the internal peace of England, while war or state policy detained the king in Normandy.

Adelia, following the example of her popular predecessor Matilda, "the good queen," in all that was deserving of imitation, conducted herself in a manner calculated to win the esteem and love of the nation; using her queenly influence for the establishment of good order, religion, and refinement, and the encouragement of learning and the arts. The king was absent from England three years and a half, before the expiration of which time Adelia joined him in Normandy. Henry had defeated his enemies at the battle of Terroude, near Rouen, and taken a merciless vengeance on the revolted vassals of Normandy, who were so unfortunate as to fall into his hands. His treatment of the luckless troubadour knight, Luke de Barré,<sup>2</sup> though the circumstances are almost too dreadful for repetition, bears too strongly on the manners and customs of the twelfth century to be omitted. Luke de Barré had, according to the testimony of Ordericus Vitalis, been on terms of the greatest familiarity with Henry Beauclerc in the days of their youth, but, from some cause, had joined the revolt of the earl of Mellent in the late insurrection; and the said earl, and all the confederate peers allied against Henry's government in Normandy, had been wonderfully comforted and encouraged by the *serventes*, or war-songs, of Luke.

These songs were provokingly satirical; and, being personally levelled against Henry, contained, we should suppose, some passages, which involved a betrayal of confidence; for Henry was so bitterly incensed, that when the luckless poet was made prisoner at the battle of Terroude, he barbarously condemned his former friend to lose his eyes on a scaffold, by the hands of the public executioner. This sentence was greatly lamented by the court; for Luke de Barré was not only a pleasant and jocular companion, but a gentleman of courage and honour. The earl of Flanders interceded for the wretched victim.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Chron Walli.

<sup>2</sup> Sismondi.

Ordericus Vitalis

"No, sir, no," replied Henry; "for this man being a wit, a bard, and a minstrel, forsooth! hath composed many ribald songs against me, and sung them to raise the horse-laughs of mine enemies. Now it hath pleased God to deliver him into mine hands, punished he shall be, to deter others from the like petulance."<sup>1</sup>

The sentence therefore took place, and the hapless poet died of the wounds he received in struggling with the executioner.<sup>2</sup> The Provençal annalists, however, declare that the gallant troubadour avoided the execution of Henry's sentence, by dashing his head against the wall, which caused his death. So much for the punishment of libels in the twelfth century.

The Saxon Chronicle specifies that queen Adelicia returned to England, September, 1126, accompanied by king Henry and his daughter, the empress Matilda, the heiress presumptive of England, then a widow, in her twenty-fourth year.

According to Malmsbury and other several contemporary historians, strange and mysterious reports were in circulation throughout Europe, connected with the death, or rather we should say the disappearance of Matilda's imperial spouse; for it was affirmed that he was not dead, though his obsequies had been performed with all due solemnity, and a stately monument was raised to his memory, in the cathedral of Spire.

Ever since the miserable death of his unhappy father, Henry IV., the emperor Henry V. had been subject to great mental disquiet, from the remorse which perpetually deprived him of rest. "One night," says William of Malmsbury, "he rose up from the side of the empress, and taking his staff in hand, with naked feet he wandered forth into the darkness, clad only in a woollen garment, and was never again seen in his own palace." This wild tale is repeated by Hoveden, Giraldus, and Higden, and is confirmed by various ancient manuscript chronicles, besides Trevisa, who adds, by way of sequel to the legend, that "the conscience-stricken emperor fled to England, where at Westchester he became a hermit, changing his name to God's-call, or the called of God. He lived in daily penance for the space of ten years, and was buried in the cathedral church of St. Werburga the Virgin."

The empress Matilda, after the funeral of her august spouse at Spire in 1125, took possession of his imperial diadem, which she brought to England, together with a treasure which, in those days, was by some considered of even greater importance—the hand of St. James. Matilda was reluctant to leave Germany, where she was splendidly dowered, and enjoyed a remarkable share of popularity. The princes of the empire were so much charmed with her prudent conduct and stately demeanour, that they entreated the king, her father, to permit her to choose a second consort from among their august body, promising to elect for their emperor the person on whom her choice might fall.<sup>3</sup>

King Henry, however, despairing of a male heir, as he had been married to Adelicia six years, reclaimed his widowed daughter from the

<sup>1</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Sismondi.

<sup>3</sup> W. Gemiticensis. W. Malmsbury. Sir John Haward. Speed.

admiring subjects of her late consort, and carried her with him to England. Soon after their arrival, Henry summoned a parliament for the purpose of causing the empress Matilda to be acknowledged as the heiress presumptive to the crown. This was the first instance that had occurred, since the consolidation of the Heptarchy under one supreme head, of a female standing in that important position with regard to the succession of the English crown. There was, however, neither law nor precept to forbid a female from holding the regal office, and Henry failed not to set forth to the representatives of the great body of the people, who had been summoned on this important business, his daughter's descent from their ancient line of sovereigns; telling them, "That through her, who was now his only heir, they should come to be governed again by the royal English blood, if they would make oath to secure to her, after his death, the succession as queen of England, in case of his decease without a male heir."<sup>1</sup>

It is, doubtless, on the authority of this remarkable passage in Henry's speech, that historians have called his first wife, Matilda of Scotland, the heiress of the Saxon line. This is worthy of observation.

The people of England joyfully acceded to Henry's proposition; and the nobles and prelates of the Norman aristocracy, then assembled in council on this occasion, swore fealty to the high and mighty lady Matilda as their future sovereign.

Stephen earl of Mortagne, the king's favourite nephew, (being the third son of the Conqueror's fourth daughter, Adela, countess of Blois,) was the first who bent his knee in homage to the daughter of his liege lord, as the heiress of England, and swore to maintain her righteous title to the throne of her royal father.

Stephen was the handsomest man in Europe, and remarkable for his fine carriage and knightly prowess. He bore great sway in the councils of his royal uncle, and was a general favourite of the nobles of England and Normandy. It has been said withal, that his fine person and graceful manners made a deep impression on the heart of the widowed heiress of England.

The royal family kept their Christmas this year at Windsor,<sup>2</sup> but the empress Matilda did not grace the festivities by her presence, but remained in the deepest seclusion, "abiding continually," says Matthew Paris, "in the chamber of Adelia;"—by which it appears, that notwithstanding her high rank and matronly dignity as the widow of an emperor, the heiress of England had no establishment of her own. This retirement, lasting for several months, gave rise to many mysterious reports as to the cause of her being hidden from the people, who had so recently been required to swear fealty to her as their future sovereign. By some it was said, "that the king, her father, suspected her of having accelerated the death of her late husband, the emperor, or of causing him to be spirited away from his palace." But that was evidently a groundless surmise; for Gemiticensis, a contemporary chronicler, bears testimony to "her prudent and gracious behaviour to her

<sup>1</sup> Henry of Huntingdon. W. Malmsbury. W. Gemiticensis.

<sup>2</sup> Saxon Annals.

imperial spouse, which," he observes, "was one of the causes which won the esteem of the German princes, who were urgent in their entreaties to her royal father for her restoration." This Henry pertinaciously refused, repeating, "that she was his only heir, and must dwell among her own people."<sup>1</sup> Yet, early in the following year, he again bestowed her in marriage, without the consent of his peers of parliament, and decidedly against her own inclination, on a foreign prince, whom she regarded with the most ineffable scorn, as her inferior in every point of view.

We have seen that, in her tender infancy, Matilda was used as a political puppet, by her parent, to advance his own interest, without the slightest consideration for her happiness. *Then* the victim was led a smiling sacrifice to the altar, unconscious of the joyless destiny to which parental ambition had doomed her. *Now* the case was different; it was no meek infant, but a royal matron, who had shared the imperial throne of a Kaiser, and received for years the homage of vassal princes. Moreover, she whom Henry endeavoured to compel to an abhorrent marriage of state, possessed a mind, as inflexible as his own. The disputes between the king and his daughter must have arisen to a very serious height, before he took the unpopular step of subjecting her to personal restraint, by confining her to the apartment of his queen.

Matthew Paris, indeed, labours to convince us that there was nothing unreasonable in this circumstance. "Where," says he, "should an empress live rather than with a queen, a daughter than with a mother, a fair lady, a widow, and the heir of a great nation, than where her person might be safest from danger, and her conduct from suspicion?" The historian, however, forgets that Matilda was the step-daughter of the queen; that Adelia was not older than herself, and, from the acknowledged gentleness of her disposition, unlikely to assume the slightest maternal control over the haughty heiress of England. Adelia must have felt herself very delicately situated in this business; and it appears probable that she acted as a mediator between the contending parties, conducting herself rather as a loving sister than an ambitious step-dame. The accomplished editor of the Howard Memorials infers that a very tender friendship existed between the empress Matilda and Adelia through life, which probably had commenced before the fair maid of Brabant was selected from among the princesses of Europe to share the crown of England with Henry I.; for Matilda's imperial spouse, the emperor Henry V., had been actively instrumental in assisting Godfrey Barbatus, the father of Adelia, in the recovery of Lower Louvaine—an obligation which the Louvaine princess certainly endeavoured to repay to his widow.<sup>2</sup>

Adelia's uncle, Wido of Louvaine, afterwards Pope Calixtus II., was at one period bishop of Vienna, and it is even possible that Henry's attention was first attracted to the fair maid of Brabant at the court of his daughter; and the previous intimacy between the ladies may account for the fact that the haughty Matilda lived on such good terms with her

<sup>1</sup> W. Gemiticensis.

<sup>2</sup> Howard Memorials. Chronicles of Brabant.



step-mother; for Adelia appears to have been the only person with whom she did not quarrel.

The prince to whom Henry I. had pledged the hand of his perverse heiress, was Geoffrey Plantagenet, the eldest son of his old antagonist, Fulk, earl of Anjou, and brother to the widowed princess, who had been espoused to Matilda's brother, William the Atheling.

Geoffrey Plantagenet, the heir of Anjou, had been the favourite companion of king Henry I. when on the continent. His fine person, his elegant manners, great bravery, and, above all, his learning, made his society very agreeable to the monarch who still possessed these excellencies in great perfection.<sup>1</sup> He chose to become the sponsor of Geoffrey in chivalry, and, at his own expense, had had that high ceremony performed at Rouen. After the bath into which, according to the ancient custom, the young chevalier was plunged, Henry gave him, as his godson in arms, a Spanish steed, a steel coat of mail, and cuisses of double proof against both lance and arrow, spurs of gold, a scutcheon, adorned with golden lions, a helmet, enriched with jewels, a lance of ash, with a Poitiers<sup>2</sup> head, and a sword made by Gallard, the most famous of the ancient armorers. Some of the French chroniclers declare this Geoffrey to be the first person that bore the name of Plantagenet, from putting in his helmet a plume of the flowering broom, when he went to hunt in the woods.

The king of England did not confine himself to this chivalric adoption; he was resolved that his accomplished favourite should become his son-in-law. There were, moreover, strong political reasons, in Henry's opinion, for this union. Fulk of Anjou, who had hitherto supported the claims of his gallant young son-in-law, William Clito, to the dukedom, was willing to abandon his cause, provided Henry would marry Matilda to his heir. This Henry had engaged to do, without the slightest attention to his daughter's feelings. His favourite nephew, Stephen of Blois, who is said to have rendered himself only too dear to the imperial widow, was, unfortunately for them both, a married man at that time, or the long and ruinous civil wars that desolated England during his usurpation might have been averted by a matrimonial alliance. The ceremony of betrothment between the reluctant Matilda and Geoffrey of Anjou took place on Whitsunday, 1127, and she was, after the festivities of Whitsuntide were over, conducted into Normandy by her half-brother, Robert earl of Gloucester, and Brian, son of Alan Fergeant, earl of Richmond, with great pomp.

The feasts and pageants that attended her arrival in Normandy were prolonged during three weeks. On the first day, heralds in grand costume went through the streets and squares of Rouen, shouting at every crossway this singular proclamation:—

“Thus saith king Henry!

“Let no man here present, whether native or foreigner, rich or poor,

<sup>1</sup> 1126 to 1127. Chron. de Normand. and Script. Rer. France.

<sup>2</sup> Poitiers probably derives its name from these lance-heads.

high or low, warrior or rustic, be so bold as to stay away from the royal rejoicings; for whosoever shall not take a part in the games and diversions, shall be considered guilty of an offence to our lord the king."<sup>1</sup>

King Henry had given positive commands to Matilda and her illustrious escort, that the nuptials should be solemnized by the archbishop of Rouen immediately on her arrival;<sup>2</sup> but he was himself compelled to undertake a voyage to Normandy, in August, to see the marriage concluded, which did not take place till the 26th of that month;<sup>3</sup> from which we may reasonably infer that the reluctant bride paid very little attention to his directions. The affair was at length, however, accomplished to Henry's satisfaction, more especially as Fulk of Anjou, being called to the throne of Jerusalem, by the death of Baldwin II., his father-in-law, resigned his patrimonial territories to his heir. Yet there were many circumstances that rendered this alliance a fruitful source of annoyance to Henry. The Anglo-Norman barons and prelates were highly offended, in the first place, that the king should have presumed to marry the heiress out of the realm without consulting them on the subject; and the people of England were no less displeased, at the open violence that had been put on the inclinations of the descendant of their ancient sovereigns in this foreign marriage. As for Matilda, it should seem that she did not consider herself by any means bound to practise the duty of obedience, or even of common courtesy, to a husband who had thus been forced upon her against her own will; and while she exacted the most unqualified submissions from her luckless helpmate, she perpetually wearied her father with her complaints of his conduct.

Queen Adelia was rejoined by king Henry, in the autumn, and they kept their Christmas together in London. Early in the following spring, 1128, he was again compelled to embark for Normandy, to defeat the enterprising designs of his nephew, William Clito, who, having succeeded to the earldom of Flanders, in right of his grandmother Matilda, the wife of William the Conqueror, was enabled to assume a more formidable attitude than he had yet done. But this gallant and unfortunate prince met with his death in consequence of a slight wound in the thumb, which he took in disarming a mutinous soldier of his lance. He died six days after,<sup>4</sup> in the monastery of St. Bertin, July 27, 1128.

This formidable rival being now removed, Henry appeared at the summit of his ambition, and was considered the mightiest monarch of the West. He was the husband withal of one of the most beautiful and amiable princesses in Europe.

Whether the fair Adelia loved her royal spouse, history has not recorded; but her conduct as a wife, a queen, and even as a step-mother, was irreproachable. When all circumstances are considered, it can

<sup>1</sup>Brompton. Malmesbury. Script. Rer. Fran.

<sup>2</sup>Saxon Annals. S. Dunelm. Malmesbury. Huntingdon. <sup>3</sup>Saxon Annals.

<sup>4</sup>His captive father, Robert Courthose, it is said, one morning surprised his attendants by weeping piteously, and exclaiming, "My son is dead! my son is dead!" and related, "that he had in his dreams, that night, seen him mortally wounded with a lance."—Ordericus Vitalis.

scarcely be imagined, however, that her splendid marriage was productive of happiness to the youthful wife of Henry I. To say nothing of the disparity in years between this illustrious pair, the morbid sorrow of which Henry was the perpetual prey after the loss of his children in the white ship, the irascibility of temper to which he gave way in his old age, and his bitter disappointment at the want of offspring from his second marriage, must have been most distressing to the feelings of his gentle consort. Then the stormy disputes between Henry and his only daughter Matilda could not have been otherwise than very painful to her. Whatever, however, were the trials with which Adelia had to contend, she evidently supported them with silent magnanimity, and at the same time endeavoured to soothe and cheer the gloom of her wayward lord by attracting to the court the most distinguished poets and minstrels of the age, who repaid her liberal patronage by celebrating her virtues and her charms.

Adelia frequently attended her royal husband on his progresses. Her presence was, doubtless, of medicinal influence in those fearful hours when the pangs of troubled conscience brought the visitations of an evil spirit upon Henry, and sleep either forsook his pillow or brought visionary horrors in its train. "In the year 1130, the king complained to Grimbald, his Saxon physician, that he was sore disquieted of nights, and that he seemed to see a great number of husbandmen with their rustical tools stand about him, threatening him for wrongs done against them. Sometimes he appeared to see his knights and soldiers threatening him; which sight so feared him in his sleep, that oftentimes he rose undrest out of his bed, took weapon in hand, and sought to kill them he could not find. Grimbald, his physician, being a notably wise man, expounded his dreams by true conjecture, and willed him to reform himself by alms and prayer, as Nebuchadnezzar did by the counsel of Daniel."<sup>1</sup>

It is probable that the unfortunate troubadour knight, Luke de Barré, was not forgotten by the conscience-stricken monarch, though historians have not recorded that his mangled form was among the ghastly *dramatis personæ* that, in his latter years, made king Henry's nights horrible;—no enviable state of companionship, we should imagine, for the young and innocent being whose fate was indissolubly linked with his. It must have been a relief at all times to Adelia when her royal husband's presence was required in Normandy.

On the death of Adelia's uncle, pope Calixtus II., a dispute occurring in the election of two rival pontiffs as successors to the papal chair, Henry proceeded to the continent, in the year 1130, in the hope of reaping some political advantage from the candidate whose cause he espoused. His arrangements were perfectly satisfactory as to that matter, but he was, to the last degree, harassed by the quarrels between his daughter and her unbeloved spouse, Geoffrey of Anjou. After he had thrice adjusted their differences, Matilda, on some fresh offence which she either gave or took, abjured her husband's company, departed from his court, and claimed

<sup>1</sup> Stowe. H. Huntingdon.

the protection of the king her father, with whom she once more returned to England,<sup>1</sup> having, by the eloquence of tears and complaints, succeeded in exciting his indignation against her husband, and persuading him that she was an injured person.

Soon after their arrival in England, a parliament was summoned to meet at Northampton, September, 1131, where the oath of fealty to Matilda, as the heiress of England, was again renewed by the general estates of the nation.<sup>2</sup>

It was a subject of the greatest disappointment, both to the sovereign and the people, that there was no prospect of either the queen Adelicia, or the empress Matilda (though both were still young and beautiful women) bringing heirs to the crown. So desirable was the possibility of the royal line being continued through Matilda considered, that when the count of Anjou sent an humble entreaty to his haughty consort to return to him, the king and parliament seconded his request; and all due submissions having been made by Geoffrey, Matilda was at length induced to return to him.<sup>3</sup>

A passage from Mezerai casts some light on the mysterious separation that took place between the widowed empress and her new spouse. After the nuptials of this pair, a monk came to Matilda, and declared that her late lord, the emperor Henry, had not died at Utrecht, as she and all the world supposed, but that he finished his days as a servant in an hospital, which severe penance he had sworn to inflict on himself for his heavy sins. When dying at Angers, the disguised emperor discovered himself to this monk, his confessor, who came to Matilda with the news. In conclusion it is said, the empress attended the death-bed of Henry V., and recognised and acknowledged him, as the emperor, her first husband.

This is a fine tragic tale, whether it be true or false.

The following year was remarkable for a destructive fire, which consumed the greatest part of London;<sup>4</sup> but soon after this national calamity, the joyful news that the empress Matilda had given birth to a prince,<sup>5</sup> diverted the attention of the royal family from the contemplation of this misfortune, and cast the last gleam of brightness on the declining years of the king.

The young prince was named Henry, after his royal grandfather, the king of England. The Normans called him Fitz-Empress, but king Henry proudly styled the boy Fitz-Conqueror, in token of his illustrious descent from the mightiest monarch of the line of Rollo.<sup>6</sup>

King Henry summoned his last parliament in 1133, for the purpose of causing this precious child to be included in the oath of fealty, by which the succession to the throne was, for the third time, secured to his daughter, the empress Matilda. If his queen Adelicia had brought him a son, after these repeated acts in favour of his daughter by a princess who was regarded by the majority of the people as the heiress of the royal English line, in all probability, a civil war respecting the

<sup>1</sup> Roger Hoveden. H. Huntingdon.

<sup>2</sup> Malmsbury. H. Huntingdon.

<sup>3</sup> M. Paris. <sup>4</sup> H. Huntingdon. <sup>5</sup> R. Diceto. M. Paris. <sup>6</sup> M. Westminster.

succession, would have occurred on the death of king Henry. The barrenness of the beautiful young queen, however, though so deeply lamented by her royal husband, was at that time, no doubt, a providential dispensation, and one of the causes of the amity and confidence that subsisted between her and her haughty step-daughter.

Towards the latter end of this summer, king Henry embarked on his last voyage for Normandy. The day was remarkable for a total eclipse of the sun, accompanied with storms and violent commotions of the deep.<sup>1</sup> It was so dark, say the annalists of that era, "that on board the royal ship no man might see another's face for some hours." The eclipse was followed by an earthquake; and these two phenomena were, according to the spirit of the age, regarded as portents of horror and woe, and it was predicted that the king would never return from Normandy.<sup>2</sup>

On a former occasion, when Henry had embarked for England, in June 1131, he was so dismayed by the bursting of a water-spout over the vessel, and the fury of the wind and waves, that, believing his last hour was at hand, he made a penitent acknowledgment of his sins, promising to lead a new life if it should please God to preserve him from the peril of death, and, above all, he vowed to repeal the oppressive impost of danegelt for seven years, if he were permitted to reach the English shore in safety.<sup>3</sup> From this incident we may infer that Henry I. was by no means impressed with his brother Rufus's bold idea, of the security of a king of England from a watery grave; but the catastrophe of his children in the fatal white ship had no doubt some effect on his mind, during these perils on the deep.

The summer of 1133 he spent in Normandy, in feasts and rejoicings, for the birth of his infant grandson. That event was, however, only the precursor of fresh dissensions between that ill-assorted pair, the empress Matilda and her husband, Geoffrey Plantagenet. Her late visit to England had renewed the scandalous reports respecting her partiality for her cousin, Stephen of Blois; and the birth of a son in the sixth year of their marriage to the long childless pair proved anything but a bond of union between them.<sup>4</sup>

There is no reason to suppose that Adelia was with the king her husband at the time of his death, which took place in Normandy, in the year 1135, at the Castle of Lyons near Rouen, a place in which he much delighted. It is said, that having over-fatigued himself in hunting in the forest of Lyons, he returned much heated, and, contrary to the advice of his courtiers and physicians, made too full a meal on a dish of stewed lampreys, his favourite food, which brought on a violent fit of indigestion (called by the chroniclers a surfeit), ending in a fever, of which he died, after an illness of seven days, at midnight, December 1st, in the sixty-seventh year of his age. He appears to have been perfectly conscious of his approaching dissolution, for he gave particular directions respecting his obsequies to his natural son, Robert earl of Gloucester, whom he charged to take 60,000 marks out of his treasure-chest at

<sup>1</sup> Saxon Annals.<sup>2</sup> W. Malmesbury.<sup>3</sup> Saxon Annals.<sup>4</sup> Saxon Chronicle.

Falaise, for the expenses of his funeral, and the payment of his mercenary troops.<sup>1</sup> He solemnly bequeathed his dominions to his daughter the empress, not without some indignant mention of her luckless spouse, Geoffrey of Anjou, his former *élève* and *bel ami*. He absolutely excluded him from any share in his bequests, and with much earnestness constituted his beloved son, earl Robert, the protector of his daughter's rights.

His nephews, Warren earl of Surrey, and Stephen de Blois earl of Mortagne, with Robert earl of Leicester, were standing round the bed of the expiring monarch, and were witnesses of his charge to his son, the earl of Gloucester.<sup>2</sup>

Robert of Gloucester gives the following serio-comic account of the royal wilfulness, in partaking of the interdicted food which caused his death :

"When he came home he willed him a lamprey to eat.  
Though his leeches him forbade, for it was a feeble meat;  
But he would not them believe, for he loved it well enow,  
And eat in evil case, for the lamprey it him slow,  
For right soon after it into anguish him drew,  
And he died for his lamprey unto his own woe."

The noble earls who surrounded the death-bed of king Henry, and listened to his last instructions respecting his funeral, attended his remains from the town of St. Denis le Forment (where he breathed his last) to Rouen; and when they entered that city, they reverently bore the bier, on which the royal corpse was laid, on their shoulders by turns.<sup>3</sup>

At Rouen, the remains of this mighty sovereign, in preparation for removal to England, underwent the process of embalming, as it was called, according to the barbarous fashion described by the chroniclers: the body was sliced and powdered with much salt, and wrapped in a bull's hide.

The remains of king Henry were interred with great pomp on Christmas-day, at the abbey of Reading, which he had built and magnificently endowed for that purpose. On the anniversary of the death of her royal lord, queen Adelicia, to testify her respect for his memory, gave by charter the manor of Eton in Hertfordshire to the abbey of Reading, for prayers to be said for his soul; and, by a second charter, she also gave the manor of Stanton Harcourt, in Oxfordshire, and the churches of Cham, Eslingham, and others, for the expenses of his anniversary—a solemn service for the repose of his soul,—which was yearly to be celebrated there.<sup>4</sup> The royal widow also gave one hundred shillings, out of the hythe, or wharf (Queen hythe), belonging to her in London, to be applied to the expenses of a lamp, to burn perpetually before his tomb.<sup>5</sup> In these charters and deeds she styles herself "Adalid the queen.

<sup>1</sup> Ordericus Vitalis. W. Malmsbury.

Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Huntingdon

<sup>4</sup> Howard Memorials. Monasticon, Charter 7. art. Reading.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

wife of the most noble king Henry, and daughter of Godfrey, duke of Lotharingia."<sup>1</sup>

The chroniclers of that reign, several of whom were well acquainted with him, have given the following lively description of the person of Adelia's royal lord. "He was, for personage, of reasonable stature, broad-breasted, well-jointed, and full of flesh, amiable of countenance, with fine and penetrating eyes, and black hair, carelessly hanging about his forehead."<sup>2</sup> It is to be remarked, that after he had been induced, by the eloquent preaching of friar Serlo, to submit this natural ornament to the shears of that priestly reformer, he was very strict in his prohibitions to his subjects against long hair.

Two illuminated portraits of Henry I. are in existence: both represent him as advanced in life, and in a melancholy attitude; supposed to be after the loss of his children. His face is handsome, with high and regular features, his hair curling, but not long; his figure is emaciated, he is clad in a very close dress, the shoe and stocking all of a piece, and the toe pointed; he wears a mantle wrapped about him. His crown is ornamented with three trefoils; his sceptre is a staff with an ornamented head. He is seated on a stone bench, carved in an architectural design. He is represented in the coronation robes he wore at the crowning of Adelia.<sup>3</sup>

Henry received from his subjects the title of the Lion of Justice. This appellation was drawn from the prophecies of Merlin, then very popular in England. On the accession of every sovereign to the English throne, all his subjects consulted these rigmároles, as naturally as we consult an almanac, to know when there is a new moon.

"After two dragons," says Merlin, "the Lion of Justice shall come, at whose roaring the Gallic towers and island serpents shall tremble."

This Lion of Justice certainly suffered no one to break the laws but himself, if he is accountable for the villanies of his purveyors, his standard of justice was not very high: "the king's servants, and a multitude following the royal retinue, took and spoiled everything the way the king went, there being no discipline or good order taken."<sup>4</sup> When they could not consume what they found in the house they had broken into, they made the owners carry it to market and sell it for them; they burned the provisions, or washed their horses' feet with the ale or mead, or poured the drink on the ground, or otherwise wasted it, so that every

<sup>1</sup> *Ego Adalid Regina, uxor nobilissimi Regis Henrici, et filia Godfridi ducis Lotharingie.*

<sup>2</sup> Cottonian MSS. Vitellius.

<sup>3</sup> These portraits exactly agree with the descriptions of the costume from the monastic chronicles. "They wore close breeches and stockings, all of a piece, made of fine cloth;" the pointed shoes were brought in by William Rufus, but were first invented by Folque le Rechin (whose surname means the quarreller), count of Anjou, to hide his corns and bunions. The queen and women of rank wore gowns and mantles trailing on the ground. The married women wore an additional robe over the gown, not unlike the sacerdotal garment; to the girdle a large pouch or purse was suspended, called an *aumoniére*. The men wore their hair in long curls, unless seized with sudden fits of fanaticism. The married women braided theirs very closely to the side of the face, or hid it.

<sup>4</sup> Eadmer.

one hearing of the king's coming would run away from their houses." Whenever Henry I. was under any apprehensions from his brother Robert, he regulated his household somewhat better, and kept the lawlessness of his purveyors within bounds.<sup>1</sup>

Henry carried the art of dissimulation to such a pitch that his grand justiciary started when he heard the king had praised him, and exclaimed, "God defend me! the king praises no one but him whom he means to destroy."<sup>2</sup>

The result proved the deep knowledge which the minister had of his royal master's character, as Henry of Huntingdon, his archdeacon, details at length.

What degree of happiness Adelia the Fair enjoyed during the fifteen years of queenly splendour which she passed as the consort of Henry Beauclerc, no surviving records tell; but that she was very proud of his achievements and brilliant talents, we have the testimony of the poetical chronicler, who continued the history of Brut, from William the Conqueror, through the reign of William Rufus. It appears, moreover, that the royal dowager employed herself during her widowhood in collecting materials for the history of her mighty lord; for Gaimar, the author of the history of the Angles, observes, "that if he had chosen to have written of king Henry, he had a thousand things to say, which the troubadour called David, employed by queen Adelia, knew nought about; neither had he written, nor was the Louvaine queen herself in possession of them."

If the collection of queen Adelia should ever be brought to light, it would no doubt afford a curious specimen of the biographical powers of the illustrious widow, and her assistant, Troubadour David, whose name has only been rescued from oblivion by the jealousy of a disappointed rival in the art of historical poetry.

During the life of the king her husband, Adelia had founded and endowed the hospital and conventual establishment of St. Giles, near Wilton;<sup>3</sup> and, according to a Wiltshire tradition, she resided there during some part of her widowhood, in the house which is still called by her name.<sup>4</sup> She was likewise dowered by her late husband, king Henry, in the fair domain of Arundel Castle, and its rich dependencies, the forfeit inheritance<sup>5</sup> of the brutal Robert earl of Belesme; and here, no doubt, the royal widow held her state at the expiration of the first year of cloistered seclusion, after the death of her illustrious spouse.

Camden thus describes the spot which the magnificent taste of the late duke of Norfolk has, within the last century, rendered one of the most splendid objects of attraction in England:—"Beyond Selsey, the shore breaks, and makes way for a river that runs out of St. Leonard's forest, and then by Arundel, seated on a hill, over a vale, of the river Arun." At this Saxon castle, built and strengthened on the hill above the waters, Adelia was residing when she consented to become the wife of William de Albini, of the Strong Hand, the lord of Buckenham in Norfolk, and one of the most chivalrous peers in Europe.

<sup>1</sup> Malmesbury.

<sup>2</sup> Henry of Huntingdon.

<sup>3</sup> Howard Memorials.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Richard Hoare's Modern Wiltshire.

<sup>5</sup> Tienier's Arundel.



According to Mr. Howard's computation, Adelia was in her thirty second year at the time of king Henry's death, in the very pride of her beauty ; and she contracted her second marriage in the third year of her widowhood, A.D. 1138.<sup>1</sup>

Her second spouse, William de Albini, with the Strong Arm, was the son of William de Albini, who was called Pincerna,<sup>2</sup> being the chief butler or cup-bearer of the duchy of Normandy. William the Conqueror appointed him to the same office in England at his coronation in Westminster Abbey ; which honour has descended by hereditary custom to the duke of Norfolk, his rightful representative and heir ; and when there is a coronation banquet, the golden cup out of which the sovereign drinks to the health of his or her loving subjects becomes his perquisite.<sup>3</sup>

It appears that Adelia and Albini were affianced some time previous to their marriage ; for when he won the prize at the tournament held at Bourges in 1137, in honour of the nuptials of Louis VII. of France and Eleanor of Aquitaine, Adelaide, the gay queen-dowager of France, fell passionately in love with him, and wooed him to become her husband, but he replied, "that his troth was pledged to Adelia, the queen of England."<sup>4</sup>

Although it may be considered somewhat remarkable that two queen-dowagers of similar names should have fixed their affections on the same gentleman, there is every reason to believe that such was the fact ; but the marvellous legend so gravely related by Dugdale,<sup>5</sup> containing the sequel of the tale, namely, the unlady-like conduct of the rejected dowager of France, in pushing the strong-handed Albini into a cave in her garden, where she had secreted a fierce lion to become the minister of her jealous vengeance, together with the knight's redoubtable exploit in tearing out the lion's heart, which he must have found conveniently situated at the bottom of his throat, a place where no anatomist would have thought of feeling for it, must be regarded as one of the popular romances of the age of chivalry.

We have seen another version of the story, in which the hero is said to have deprived the lion, not of his heart, but his tongue ; and this is doubtless the tradition relating to William of the Strong Hand, since the Albini-lion on the ancient armorial bearings of that house is tongueless, and is, by-the-bye, one of the most good-tempered looking beasts ever seen.

Romance and ideality out of the question, William de Albini was not only a knight *sans peur et sans reproche*, stout in combat, and constant in loyalty and love, but history proves him to have been one of the greatest and best men of that age. His virtues and talents sufficiently justified the widow of the mighty sovereign of England and Normandy in bestowing her hand upon him ; nor was Adelia's second marriage in the slightest degree offensive to the subjects of her late husband, or considered derogatory to the dignity of a queen-dowager of England.

<sup>1</sup> Howard Memorials.

<sup>2</sup> Howard Memorials. Dugdale.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Dugdale's Baronage.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

Adelicia, by her union with Albini, conveyed to him a life interest in her rich dowry of Arundel, and he accordingly assumed the title of earl of Arundel, in her right, as the possessor of Arundel Castle.<sup>1</sup> It was at this feudal fortress, on the then solitary coast of Sussex, that the royal beauty, who had for fifteen years presided over the splendid court of Henry Beauchere, voluntarily resided with her second husband—the husband, doubtless, of her heart—in the peaceful obscurity of domestic happiness, far remote from the scenes of her former greatness.

Adelicia's wisdom in avoiding all the snares of party, by retiring from public life at a period so full of perilous excitement as the early part of Stephen's reign, cannot be disputed. Her gentle disposition, her good taste, and feminine feelings, fitted her for the enjoyments of private life, and she made them her choice.

There was, however, nothing of a selfish character in the conduct of the royal matron in declining to exert such influence as she possessed in advocating the claims of her step-daughter Matilda to the throne of England. As a queen-dowager, Adelicia had no voice in the choice of a sovereign; as a female, she would have departed from her province, had she intermeddled with intrigues of state, even for the purpose of assisting the lawful heir to the crown. She left the question to be decided by the peers and people of England; and as they did not oppose the coronation of Stephen, she had no pretence for interfering; but she never sanctioned the usurpation of the successful rival of her step-daughter's right, by appearing at his court. And when the empress Matilda landed in England, to dispute the crown with Stephen, the gates of Arundel Castle were thrown open to receive her and her train, by the royal Adelicia and her high-minded husband Albini.<sup>2</sup> It was in the year 1139 when this perilous guest claimed the hospitality, and finally the protection, of the noble pair, whose wedded happiness had been rendered more perfect by the birth of a son, probably very little before that period, for it was only in the second year of their marriage. And she, over whose barrenness as the consort of the mightiest monarch of the West, both sovereign and people had lamented for nearly fifteen years, became, when the wife of a subject, the mother of a numerous progeny, the ancestress of an illustrious line of English nobles, in whose veins her royal blood has been preserved in uninterrupted course to the present day.

According to Malmsbury, and many other historians, the empress Matilda was only attended by her brother, the earl of Gloucester, and a hundred and forty followers, when she landed at Portsmouth, in the latter end of September. Gervase and Brompton aver that she came with a numerous army; but the general bearings of history prove that this was not the fact, since Matilda was evidently in a state of absolute peril when her generous step-mother afforded her an asylum within the walls of Arundel Castle, for we find that her devoted friend and brother, Robert earl of Gloucester, when he saw that she was honou-  
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<sup>1</sup> Howard Memorials. Tierney's Hist. Arundel.

<sup>2</sup> Malmsbury. Speed. Rapin.

bly received there, considered her in a place of safety, and, attended by only twelve persons, proceeded to Bristol.

No sooner was Stephen informed that the empress Matilda was in Arundel Castle, than he raised the siege of Marlborough, and commenced a rapid march towards Arundel, in order to attack her in her retreat. The spirit with which he pushed his operations alarmed the royal ladies.<sup>1</sup> Adelicia dreaded the destruction of her castle, the loss of her beloved husband, and the breaking up of all the domestic happiness she had enjoyed since her retirement from public life. The empress Matilda suffered some apprehension lest her gentle step-mother should be induced to deliver her into the hands of her foe. There was, however, no less firmness than gentleness in the character of Adelicia; and the moment Stephen approached her walls, she sent messengers to entreat his forbearance, assuring him "that she had admitted Matilda not as *his* enemy, but as her daughter-in-law and early friend, who had claimed her hospitality, which respect for the memory of her late royal lord, king Henry, forbade her to refuse; the same considerations would compel her to protect her, while she remained beneath the shelter of her roof."<sup>2</sup> Adelicia added, "that if he came in hostile array against her castle of Arundel, with intent to make Matilda his prisoner, she must frankly say, that she was resolved to defend her to the last extremity, not only because she was the daughter of her late dear lord, king Henry, but as the widow of the emperor Henry and her guest;" and she besought Stephen, "by all the laws of courtesy and the ties of kindred, not to place her in such a painful strait as to compel her to do anything against her conscience." In conclusion, she requested with much earnestness "that Matilda might be allowed to leave the castle, and retire to her brother."

Stephen acceded to the proposal, the siege was raised, and the empress proceeded to join her adherents at Bristol. Malmsbury assures us, that the impolitic conduct of Stephen on this occasion was nothing more than what the laws of chivalry demanded from every true knight.

We are inclined to regard Stephen's courteous compliance with the somewhat unreasonable prayer of the queen-dowager, as a proof of the high respect in which she was held, and the great influence over the minds of her royal husband's kindred, which her virtues and winning qualities had obtained while she wore the crown-matrimonial of England. Adelicia conducted herself with equal prudence and magnanimity in the defence and deliverance of her step-daughter, exhibiting a very laudable mixture of the wisdom of the serpent with the innocence of the dove and the courage of the lion. The lion was the cognizance of the royal house of Louvaine; and Mr. Howard is of opinion, that this proud bearing was assumed by the family of Albini, in token of descent from the fair maid of Brabant, rather than with any reference to the fabled exploit of her second husband, related in Dugdale's baronage.<sup>3</sup>

A grateful remembrance of the generous conduct of Stephen, in all

<sup>1</sup> Malmsbury. Gervase. M. Paris. H. Huntingdon.

<sup>2</sup> Gervase. Malmsbury. Rabin.

<sup>3</sup> Howard's Memorials.

probability withheld Adelia and Albin from taking part with the empress Matilda against him, in the long and disastrous civil war which desolated the ravaged plains of England with kindred blood, during so many years of that inauspicious reign. They appear to have maintained a strict neutrality, and to have preserved their vassals and neighbours from the evils attendant upon the contest between the empress and the king.

Adelia, after her happy marriage with the husband of her choice, was not forgetful of the respect which she considered due to the memory of her late royal lord, king Henry; for, by a third charter, she granted to his favourite abbey of Reading the church of Berkeley Harness in Gloucestershire,<sup>1</sup> with suitable endowments, "to pray for the soul of king Henry and duke Godfrey her father, and also for the health of her present lord," whom she styles, "William earl of Chichester, and for her own health, and the health of her children." Thus we observe that this amiable princess unites the departed objects of her veneration in the devotional offices which she fondly caused the monks of Reading to offer up, for the welfare of her living husband, her beloved children, and herself. To her third son, Adelia gave the name of her deceased lord, king Henry. Her fourth was named Godfrey, after her father and elder brother, the reigning duke of Brabant.

Adelia chiefly resided at Arundel Castle, after her marriage with William de Albin, but there is also traditional evidence, that she occasionally lived with him in the noble feudal castle, which he built, after his marriage with her, at Buckenham in Norfolk. It is still designated in that county, as *New Buckenham*, though the mound, part of the moat, and a few mouldering fragments of the walls, are all that remain of the once stately hall, that was at times graced with the dowager court of *Alix la Belle*.

The priory of St. Bartholomew, likewise called the priory of the Causeway, in the parish of Lyminster, near Arundel, was established by queen Adelia, after her marriage with William de Albin, as a convent of Augustinian canons.<sup>2</sup> It was situated at the foot of the hill which overlooks the town from the south side of the river.

The number of inmates appears originally to have been limited by the royal foundress to two persons, whose principal business was to take charge of the bridge, and to preserve the passage of the river. All her gifts and charters were solemnly confirmed by her husband, William Albin, who appears to have cherished the deepest respect for his royal spouse, always speaking of her as "*eximia regina*,"—that is, inestimable or surpassingly excellent queen.<sup>3</sup>

We find, from the Monasticon, that Adelia gave in trust to the bishop of Chichester certain lands in Arundel, to provide salaries for the payment of two chaplains to celebrate divine service in that castle. The last recorded act of Adelia was the grant of the prebend of West Dean to the cathedral of Chichester, in 1150.

<sup>1</sup> Monasticon, Charter 9. Howard Memorials.

<sup>2</sup> Dugdale's Monasticon. Lib. Epist. B. vol. xviii.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

In the year 1149, a younger brother of Adelia, Henry of Louvaine, was professed a monk in the monastery of Affligham, near Alost in Flanders, which had been founded by their father Godfrey, and his brother Henry of Louvaine; and soon after, the royal Adelia herself,<sup>1</sup> stimulated no doubt by his example, withdrew not only from the pomps and parade of earthly grandeur, but from the endearments of her adoring husband and youthful progeny, and, crossing the sea, retired to the nunnery in the same foundation, where she ended her days,<sup>2</sup> and was likewise buried.<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Howard, in his interesting sketch of the life of his royal ancestress, states it to be his opinion, that Adelia did not take this important step without the full consent of her husband. Strange as it appears to us, that any one who was at the very summit of earthly felicity should have broken through such fond ties of conjugal and maternal love as those by which Adelia was surrounded, to bury herself in cloistered seclusion, there is indubitable evidence that such was the fact.

Sanderus, in his Account of the Abbeyes and Churches of Brabant, relates that "Fulgentius, the abbot of Affligham, visited queen Adelia at the court of her royal husband, Henry I.; where he was received with especial honours." The same author expressly states, that Adelia died in the convent of Affligham, and was interred there on the 9th of the calends of April. He does not give the date of the year. From the mortuary of the abbey, he quotes the following Latin record of the death of this queen; <sup>4</sup>

"Aleidem genuit cum barba dux Godefredus,  
Que fuit Anglorum regina piissima morum."

The annals of Margan date this event in the year 1151.

There is a charter in Affligham, granted by Henry of Louvaine, on condition that prayers may be said, for the welfare of his brother Godfrey, the reigning duke, his sister Aleyda the queen, and Ida, the countess of Cleves, and their parents.<sup>5</sup>

Adelia must have been about forty-eight years old at the time of her death. She had been married eleven years, or thereabouts, to William de Albini, Lord of Buckenham. At his paternal domain of New Buckenham in Norfolk, a foundation was granted by William de Albini of the Strong Arm, enjoining that prayers might be said for the departed spirit of his *eximia regina*. He survived her long enough to be the happy means of composing, by an amicable treaty, the death-strife which had convulsed England for fifteen years, in consequence of the bloody succession war between Stephen and the empress Matilda.<sup>6</sup>

This great and good man is buried in Wymondham Abbey, near the tomb of his father, the Pincerna of England and Normandy.

By her marriage with Albini, Adelia became the mother of seven surviving children. William earl of Arundel, who succeeded to the estates and honours; Reynier; Henry; Godfrey; Alice, married to the

<sup>1</sup> Butken's trophies du Brabant.

Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Sanderus's Abbeyes and Churches in Brabant.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Howard Memorials.

<sup>5</sup> This will be detailed in the succeeding biography.

count d'Eu; Olivia; Agatha. The two latter were buried at Boxgrove, near Arundel.

Though Adelia had so many children by her second marriage, her tender affection for her father's family caused her to send for her younger brother, Joceline of Louvaine, to share in her prosperity and happiness; and the munificent earl, her husband, to enable this landless prince to marry advantageously, gave him the fair domain of Petworth, on his wedding Agnes, the heiress of the Percies: "since which," says Camden, "the posterity of that Joceline, who took the name of Percy, have ever possessed it—a family certainly very ancient and noble, the male representatives of Charlemagne, more direct than the dukes of Guise, who pride themselves on that account. Joceline, in a donation of his which I have seen, uses this title: 'Joceline of Louvaine, brother to queen Adelia, Castellaine of Arundel.'"

Two ducal peers of England are now the representatives of the imperial Carlovingian line—namely, the duke of Norfolk, the heir of queen Adelia; and the duke of Northumberland, the lineal descendant of her brother Joceline of Louvaine.

The two most unfortunate of all the queens of England, Anna Boleyn and Katharine Howard, were the lineal descendants of Adelia, by her second marriage with William de Albini.

## MATILDA OF BOULOGNE,

### QUEEN OF STEPHEN.

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Matilda's descent from Saxon kings—Her mother a Saxon princess—Her father—Matilda espoused to Stephen of Blois—Residence at Tower-Royal—Matilda's popularity in London—Stephen seizes the throne—Birth of prince Eustace—Coronation of Matilda—Queen left regent—Disasters—Queen besieges Dover Castle—Mediates peace with her uncle—Empress Matilda lands in England—Henry of Blois—Civil war—Queen goes to France—Marriage of her young heir—Raises an army—Stephen captured—Arrogance of empress—Queen's grief—Exertions in Stephen's cause—Queen Matilda writes to bishop Blois—Her supplication for Stephen's liberty—Obduracy of empress—Queen appeals to arms—Empress in Winchester—Her seal—Insults Londoners—Driven from London—Successes of the queen—Takes Winchester—Escape of empress—Earl of Gloucester taken—Exchanged for Stephen—Illness of king Stephen—Empress escapes from Oxford—Her son—Decline of empress's cause—Queen Matilda founds St. Katherine by the Tower—Death of the queen—Burial—Tomb—Epitaph—Children—Eustace—Death of king Stephen—Burial by his queen—Exhumation of their bodies.

MATILDA of Boulogne, the last of our Anglo-Norman queens, was a princess of the ancient royal line of English monarchs. Her mother, Mary of Scotland, was the second daughter of Malcolm Canmore and Margaret Atheling, and sister to Matilda the Good, the first queen of Henry Beauclerc. Mary of Scotland was educated with her elder sister, in the royal monasteries of Wilton and Rumsey, under the stern tutelage of their aunt Christina; and was doubtless, like the princess Matilda, compelled to assume the habit of a votaress. Whether the youthful Mary testified the same lively antipathy to the consecrated black veil, that was exhibited by her elder sister, no gossiping monastic chronicler has recorded; but she certainly forsook the cloister, for the court of England, on Matilda's auspicious nuptials with Henry I., and exchanged the badge of celibacy for the nuptial ring soon afterwards, when her royal brother-in-law gave her in marriage to Eustace, count of Boulogne.

The father of this nobleman was brother-in-law to Edward the Confessor, having married Goda, the widowed countess of Mantes, sister to that monarch; both himself and his son Eustace had been powerful supporters of the Saxon cause. The enterprising spirit of the counts of Boulogne, and the contiguity of their dominions to the English shores, had rendered them troublesome neighbours to William the Conqueror and his sons, till the chivalric spirit of crusading attracted their energies to a different channel, and converted these pirates of the narrow seas into heroes of the cross, and liberators of the holy city.

Godfrey of Boulogne, the hero of Tasso's *Gierusalemme Liberata*, and his brother Baldwin, who successively wore the crown of Jerusalem,

were the uncles of Matilda, Stephen's queen. Her father, Eustace count of Boulogne, was also a distinguished crusader. He must have been a mature husband for Mary of Scotland, since he was the companion in arms of Robert of Normandy, and her uncle Edgar Atheling. Matilda, or, as she is sometimes called for brevity, Maud of Boulogne, was the sole offspring of this marriage, and the heiress of this illustrious house.

There is every reason to believe Matilda was educated in the abbey of Bermondsey, to which the countess of Boulogne, her mother, was a munificent benefactress. The countess died in this abbey while on a visit to England, in the year 1115, and was buried there. We gather from the Latin verses on her tomb, that she was a lady of very noble qualities, and that her death was very painful and unexpected.<sup>1</sup>

Young as Matilda was, she was certainly espoused to Stephen de Blois before her mother's decease; for this plain reason, that the charter by which the countess of Boulogne, in the year 1114, grants to the Clugniac monks of Bermondsey her manor of Kynewardstone, is, in the year she died, confirmed by Eustace her husband, and Stephen her son-in-law.<sup>2</sup> Stephen, the third son of a vassal peer of France, obtained this great match through the favour of his royal uncle, Henry I. He inherited from the royal Adela, his mother, the splendid talents, fine person, and enterprising spirit of the mighty Norman line of sovereigns. A very tender friendship had subsisted between Adela, countess of Blois, and her brother, Henry Beauclerc, who at different periods of his life had been under important obligations to her; and when Adela sent her landless boy to seek his fortunes at the court of England, Henry returned the friendly offices which he had received from this faithful sister, by lavishing wealth and honour on her son.

Stephen received the spurs of knighthood from his uncle king Henry, previous to the battle of Tinchebraye, where he took the count of Mortagne prisoner, and received the investiture of his lands. He was farther rewarded by his royal kinsman with the hand of Matilda, the heiress of Boulogne.<sup>3</sup>

"When Stephen was but an earl," says William of Malmesbury, "he gained the affections of the people, to a degree that can scarcely be imagined, by the affability of his manners, and the wit and pleasantry of his conversation, condescending to chat and joke with persons in the humblest stations, as well as with the nobles, who delighted in his company, and attached themselves to his cause from personal regard."<sup>4</sup>

Stephen was count of Boulogne in Matilda's right, when, as count of Mortagne, he swore fealty in 1126 to the empress Matilda, as heiress to the Norman dominions of Henry I.

The London residence of Stephen and Matilda was Tower-Royal, a palace built by king Henry, and presented by him to his favoured nephew, on the occasion of his wedding the niece of his queen Matilda Atheling. The spot to which this regal-sounding name is still appended, is a close lane between Cheapside and Watling Street. Tower-Royal was a fortress

<sup>1</sup> Hist. Bermondsey Abbey.

<sup>2</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>3</sup> Annales Abbate Bermondsey.

<sup>4</sup> W. Malmesbury. Ordericus Vitalis



of prodigious strength; for more than once, when the Tower of London itself fell into the hands of the rebels, this embattled palace of Stephen remained in security.<sup>1</sup>

It is a remarkable fact, that Stephen had embarked on board the *Blanche Nef*, with his royal cousin, William the Atheling, and the rest of her fated crew; but with two knights of his train, and a few others who prudently followed his example, he left the vessel with the remark that "she was too much crowded with foolish, headstrong young people."<sup>2</sup>

After the death of prince William, Stephen's influence with his royal uncle became unbounded, and he was his constant companion in all his voyages to Normandy.

There are evidences of conjugal infidelity on the part of this gay and gallant young prince, about this period, proving that Matilda's cup of happiness was not without some alloy of bitterness. How far her peace was affected by the scandalous reports of the passion which her haughty cousin the empress Matilda, the acknowledged heiress of England and Normandy, was said to cherish for her aspiring husband, we cannot presume to say; but there was an angel-like spirit in this princess, which supported her under every trial, and rendered her a beautiful example to every royal female in the married state.

Two children, a son and a daughter, were born to the young earl and countess of Boulogne, during king Henry's reign. The boy was named Baldwin, after Matilda's uncle, the king of Jerusalem;—a Saxon name withal, and therefore likely to sound pleasantly to the ears of the English, who, no doubt, looked with complacency on the infant heir of Boulogne, as the son of a princess of the royal Atheling blood, born among them, and educated by his amiable mother to venerate their ancient laws, and to speak their language. Prince Baldwin, however, died in early childhood, and was interred in the priory of the Holy Trinity, without Aldgate, founded by his royal aunt, Matilda of Scotland. The second child of Stephen and Matilda, a daughter named Maud, born also in the reign of Henry I., died young, and was buried in the same church. Some historians aver that Maud survived long enough to be espoused to the earl of Milan.

So dear was the memory of these, her buried hopes, to the heart of Matilda, that after she became queen of England, and her loss was supplied by the birth of another son and daughter, she continued to lament for them; and the Church and Hospital of St. Katherine by the Tower were founded and endowed by her, that prayers might be perpetually said by the pious sisterhood for the repose of the souls of her first-born children.

In the latter days of king Henry, while Stephen was engaged in stealing the hearts of the men of England, after the fashion of Absalom, the mild virtues of his amiable consort recalled to their remembrance her royal aunt and namesake, Henry's first queen, and inspired them with a trembling hope of seeing her place filled eventually by a princess so

<sup>1</sup> Stowe's Survey. Pennant's London.

<sup>2</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

much more resembling her than the haughty wife of Geoffrey of Anjou. The Norman woman looked upon her mother's people with scorn, and from her they had nothing to expect but the iron yoke which her grandfather, the Conqueror, had laid upon their necks, with, perhaps, an aggravation of their miseries. But Stephen, the husband of her gentle cousin, the English-hearted Matilda, had whispered in their ears of the confirmation of the great charter of their liberties, which Henry of Normandy had granted when he became the husband of the descendant of their ancient kings, and broken, when her influence was destroyed by death and a foreign marriage.

King Henry's daughter, the empress Matilda,<sup>1</sup> was the wife of a foreign prince residing on the Continent. Stephen and his amiable princess were living in London, and daily endearing themselves to the people, by the most popular and affable behaviour. The public mind was certainly predisposed in favour of Stephen's designs, when the sudden death of king Henry in Normandy left the right of succession for the first time to a female heir. Piers of Langtoft thus describes the perplexity of the nation respecting the choice of the sovereign :—

“ On bier lay king Henry,  
On bier beyond the sea ;  
And no man might rightly know  
Who his heir suld be.”

Stephen, following the example of the deceased monarch's conduct at the time of his brother Rufus's death,<sup>2</sup> left his royal uncle and benefactor's obsequies to the care of Robert earl of Gloucester, and the other peers who were witnesses to his last words ; and embarking at Whitesand, a small port in Matilda's dominions, in a light vessel, on a wintry sea, he landed at Dover, in the midst of such a storm of thunder and lightning, that, according to William of Malmesbury, every one imagined the world was coming to an end. As soon as he arrived in London, he convened an assembly of the Anglo-Norman barons before whom his confederate and friend, Hugh Bigod, the steward of king Henry's household, swore on the holy Evangelists, “ that the deceased sovereign had disinherited the empress Matilda on his death-bed, and adopted his most dear nephew Stephen for his heir.”<sup>3</sup>

On this bold affirmation, the Archbishop of Canterbury absolved the peers of the oaths of fealty they had twice sworn to the daughter of their late sovereign—and declared “ that those oaths were null and void, and contrary, moreover, to the laws and customs of the English, who had never permitted a woman to reign over them.”

This was a futile argument, as no female had ever stood in that important position, with regard to the succession to the crown of England, in which the empress Matilda was now placed ; therefore no precedent had occurred for the establishment of a salique law in England.

Stephen was crowned on the 26th of December, his name-day, the feast of St. Stephen.<sup>4</sup> He swore to establish the righteous laws of

<sup>1</sup> The Biography of the empress Matilda is continued through this life.

<sup>2</sup> Malmesbury. <sup>3</sup> Malmesbury. Rapin. <sup>4</sup> Sir Harris Nicol. Chronolog of History.

Edward the confessor, for the general happiness of all classes of his subjects.<sup>1</sup> The English regarded Stephen's union with a princess of their race as the best pledge of the sincerity of his professions in regard to the amelioration of their condition. These hopes were, of course, increased by the birth of prince Eustace, whom Matilda brought into the world very soon after her husband's accession to the throne of England. It was, perhaps, this auspicious event that prevented Matilda from being associated in the coronation of her lord on St. Stephen's day, in Westminster Abbey. Her own coronation, according to Gervase, took place March 22d, 1136, being Easter Sunday, not quite three months afterwards. Stephen was better enabled to support the expenses of a splendid ceremonial in honour of his beloved queen, having, immediately after his own hasty inauguration, posted to Winchester and made himself master of the treasury of his deceased uncle king Henry; which contained, says Malmsbury, "one hundred thousand pounds, besides stores of plate and jewels."

The empress Matilda was in Anjou at the time of her father's sudden demise. She was entirely occupied by the grievous sickness of her husband, who was supposed to be on his death-bed.<sup>2</sup> After the convalescence of her lord, as none of her partisans in England made the slightest movement in her favour, she remained quiescent for a season, well knowing that the excessive popularity of a new monarch is seldom of long continuance in England. Stephen had begun well by abolishing danegelt, and leaving the game in the woods, forests, and uncultivated wastes, common to all his subjects; but after awhile he repented of his liberal policy, and called courts of inquiry to make men give account of the damage and loss he had sustained in his fallow deer and other wild game; he likewise enforced the offensive system of the other Norman monarchs for their preservation.

Next he obtained the enmity of the clergy, by seizing the revenues of the see of Canterbury; and lastly, to the great alarm and detriment of the peaceably disposed, he imprudently permitted his nobles to build or fortify upwards of a thousand of those strongholds of wrong and robbery called castles, which rendered their owners in a great measure independent of the crown.

Baldwin de Redvers, earl of Devonshire, was the first to give Stephen a practical proof of his want of foresight in this matter, by telling him, on some slight cause of offence, "that he was not king of right, and he would obey him no longer." Stephen proceeded in person to chastise him; in the meantime David, king of Scotland, invaded the northern counties, under pretence of revenging the wrong that had been done to his niece, the empress Matilda, by Stephen's usurpation and perjury.

Matilda of Boulogne, Stephen's consort, stood in the same degree of relationship to the king of Scotland, as the empress Matilda, since her mother, Mary of Scotland, was his sister, no less than Matilda, the queen of Henry I.

Stephen concluded a hasty peace with the Welsh princes, and advanced

<sup>1</sup> Malmsbury. Brompton. <sup>2</sup> Carruthers' Hist. of Scotland, pp. 327, 328.

to repel the invasion of king David; but when the hostile armies met near Carlisle, he succeeded in adjusting all differences by means of an amicable treaty, perhaps through the intreaties or mediation of his queen.

Easter was kept at Westminster this year, 1137, by Stephen and Matilda, with greater splendour than had ever been seen in the court of Henry Beauclerc, to celebrate the happy termination of the storm that had so lately darkened the political horizon; but the rejoicings of the queen were fearfully interrupted by the alarming illness which suddenly attacked the king, in the midst of the festivities for his safe return from the Welsh and northern expeditions.

This illness, the effect no doubt of the preternatural exertions of both mental and corporeal powers, which Stephen had compelled himself to use, during the recent momentous crisis of his fortunes, was a sort of stupor, or lethargy so nearly resembling death, that it was reported in Normandy that he had breathed his last; on which the party of the empress began to take active measures, both on the continent and in England, for the recognition of her rights.<sup>1</sup> The count of Anjou entered Normandy at the head of an army, to assert the claims of his wife and son; which were, however, disputed by Stephen's elder brother, Theobald count of Blois, not in behalf of Stephen, but himself; and the earl of Gloucester openly declared himself in favour of his sister the empress, and delivered the keys of Falaise to her husband, Geoffrey of Anjou.<sup>2</sup>

When Stephen recovered from his death-like sickness, he found everything in confusion,—the attention of his faithful queen, Matilda, having doubtless been absorbed in anxious watchings by his sick-bed, during the protracted period of his strange and alarming malady. She was now left to take care of his interests in England as best she might; for Stephen, rousing himself from the pause of exhausted nature, hastened to the continent with his infant heir Eustace, to whom queen Matilda had resigned the earldom of Boulogne, her own fair inheritance. Stephen, by the strong eloquence of an immense bribe, prevailed on Louis VII. of France, as suzerain of Normandy, to invest the unconscious babe with the duchy, and to receive his liege homage for the same.<sup>3</sup>

Meantime some portentous events occurred during Matilda's government. Sudden and mysterious conflagrations then, as now, indicated the sullen discontent of the very lower order of the English people. On the 3d of June, 1137, Rochester cathedral was destroyed by fire; the following day, the whole city of York, with its cathedral and thirty churches, was burnt to the ground; soon after, the city of Bath shared the same fate. Then conspiracies began to be formed in favour of the empress Matilda, in various parts of England; and lastly, her uncle, David king of Scotland, once more entered Northumberland, with banners displayed, in support of his supplanted kinswoman's superior title to the crown.<sup>4</sup> Queen Matilda, with courage and energy suited to this

<sup>1</sup> Hoveden. Brompton. Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>2</sup> M. Paris, &c. &c.

<sup>3</sup> Ordericus Vitalis. Henry of Huntingdon. Brompton. M. Paris. Rapin. Speed.

<sup>4</sup> Brompton. Rapin. Ordericus Vitalis.

alarming crisis, went in person, and besieged the insurgents, who had seized Dover castle; and she sent orders to the men of Boulogne, her loyal subjects, to attack the rebels by sea.

The Boulonnois obeyed the commands of their beloved princess with alacrity, and to such good purpose, by covering the Channel with their light-armed vessels, that the besieged, not being able to receive the slightest succour by sea, were forced to submit to the queen.<sup>1</sup> At this juncture Stephen arrived, and succeeded in chastising the leaders of the revolt, and drove the Scottish king over his own border. Nevertheless the empress Matilda's party, in the year 1138, began to assume a formidable aspect. Every day brought tidings to the court of Stephen of some fresh revolt. William of Malsbury relates, that when Stephen was informed of these desertions, he passionately exclaimed, "Why did they make me king, if they forsake me thus? By the birth of God,<sup>2</sup> I will never be called an abdicated king!"

The invasion of queen Matilda's uncle, David of Scotland, for the third time increased the distraction of her royal husband's affairs, especially as Stephen was too much occupied with the internal troubles of his kingdom, to be able to proceed, in person, against him. David, and his army, were, however, defeated with immense slaughter, by the warlike Thurstan, archbishop of York, at Cuton Moor. The particulars of this engagement, called the battle of the Standard, where the church militant performed such notable service for the crown, belong to general history, and are besides too well known to require repetition in the biography of Stephen's queen.

Matilda<sup>3</sup> was mainly instrumental in negotiating the peace which was concluded this year between her uncle and her lord. Prince Henry, the heir of Scotland, having, at the same time, renewed his homage to Stephen for the earldom of Huntingdon, was invited by the king to his court. The attention with which the young prince was treated by the king and queen was viewed with invidious eyes by their ill-mannered courtiers; and Ranulph, earl of Chester, took such great offence at the royal stranger being seated above him at dinner, that he made it an excuse for joining the revolted barons, and persuaded a knot of equally uncivilized nobles to follow his example on the same pretence.<sup>4</sup>

The empress Matilda, taking advantage of the fierce contention between Stephen and the hierarchy of England, made her tardy appearance, in pursuance of her claims to the crown, in the autumn of 1140. Like her uncle, Robert the Unready, the empress allowed the critical moment to slip, when, by prompt and energetic measures, she might have gained the prize for which she contended. But she did not arrive till Stephen had made himself master of the castles, and, what was of more importance to him, the great wealth of his three refractory prelates, the bishops of Salisbury, Ely, and Lincoln.

<sup>1</sup> Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>2</sup> This was Stephen's usual oath. Malsbury.

<sup>3</sup> "Through the mediation of Matilda, the wife of Stephen, and niece of David, a peace was concluded at Durham between these two kings, equitable in itself and useful to both parties."—Carruthers' *Hist. of Scotland*, vol. i. p. 339.

<sup>4</sup> Speed.

When the empress was shut up within the walls of Arundel castle, Stephen might, by one bold stroke, have made her his prisoner; but he was prevailed upon to respect the ties of consanguinity, and the high rank of the widow, and of the daughter of his benefactor king Henry. It is possible, too, that recollections of a tenderer nature, with regard to his cousin the empress, might deter him from imperilling her person, by pushing the siege. According to some of the chroniclers, the empress sent, with queen Adelicia's request that she might be permitted to retire to Bristol, a guileful letter or message to Stephen,<sup>1</sup> which induced him to promise, on his word of honour, that he would grant her safe conduct to that city. Though the empress knew that Stephen had violated the most solemn oaths which he had taken in regard to her succession to the crown, she relied upon his honour, and put herself under his protection, and was safely conducted to the castle of Bristol. King Stephen gave to his brother, Henry of Blois, bishop of Winchester, and to Waleran, earl of Mellent, the charge of conducting the empress to Bristol castle. This bright trait of chivalry contrasts beautifully with the selfishness and perfidy too prevalent at the era.

It was during this journey, in all probability, that Henry de Blois arranged his plans with the empress Matilda, for making her mistress of the royal city of Winchester, which was entirely under his influence.

While the earl of Gloucester, on behalf of his sister the empress, was contesting with king Stephen the realm of England at the sword's point, queen Matilda proceeded to France, with her son Eustace, to endeavour to strengthen her husband's cause by the aid of her foreign connexions; and, while at the court of France, successfully exerted her diplomatic powers in negotiating a marriage between the princess Constance, sister of Louis VII., and prince Eustace, then about four years old. The queen presided at this infant marriage, which was celebrated with great splendour.

Instead of receiving a dowry with a princess, queen Matilda paid a large sum to purchase her son the bride; Louis VII. in return solemnly invested his young brother-in-law with the duchy of Normandy, and lent his powerful aid to maintain him there as the nominal sovereign, under the direction of the queen his mother. This alliance, which took place in the year 1140,<sup>2</sup> greatly raised the hopes of Stephen's party; but the bands of foreign mercenaries, which his queen Matilda sent over from Boulogne and the ports of Normandy to his succour, had an injurious effect on his cause, and were beheld with jealous alarm by the people of the land; "whose miseries were in no slight degree aggravated," says the chronicler Gervase, "by the arrival of these hunger-starved wolves, who completed the destruction of the land's felicity."

It was during the absence of queen Matilda and her son, prince Eustace, that the battle, so disastrous to her husband's cause, was fought, beneath the walls of Lincoln, on Candlemas-day, 1141. Stephen had shut up a great many of the empress Matilda's partisans and their families in the city of Lincoln, which he had been for some time besieging.

<sup>1</sup>Gervase. Henry of Huntingdon.

<sup>2</sup>Florence of Worcester. Tyrrell.

The earl of Gloucester's youngest daughter, lately married to her cousin Ranulph, earl of Chester, was among the besieged; and so determined were the two earls, her father and her husband, for her deliverance, that they encouraged their followers to swim, or ford, the deep cold waters of the river Trent,<sup>1</sup> behind which Stephen and his army were encamped, and fiercely attacked him in their dripping garments; and all for the relief of the fair ladies who were trembling within the walls of Lincoln, and beginning to suffer from lack of provisions. These were the days of chivalry, be it remembered.<sup>2</sup> Speed gives us a descriptive catalogue of some of the leading characters among our valiant king Stephen's knights *sans peur*, which, if space were allowed us, we would abstract from the animated harangue with which the earl of Gloucester endeavoured to warm his shivering followers into a virtuous blaze of indignation, after they had emerged from their cold bath.<sup>3</sup>

His satirical eloquence was received by the partisans of the empress with a tremendous shout of applause; and Stephen, not to be behind-hand with his foes in bandying personal abuse as a prelude to the fight, as his own powers of articulation happened to be defective, deputed one Baldwin Fitz-Gilbert, a knight who was blessed with a Stentorian voice, to thunder forth his recrimination on the earl of Gloucester and his host, in the ears of both armies. Fitz-Gilbert, in his speech, laid scornful stress on the illegitimacy of the empress's champion, whom he designated, "Robert, the base-born general."<sup>4</sup>

The battle, for which both parties had prepared themselves with such a sharp encounter of keen words, was, to use the expression of contemporary chroniclers, "a very sore one;" but it seems as if Stephen had fought better than his followers that day. "A very strange sight it was," says Matthew Paris, "there to behold king Stephen, left almost alone in the field, yet no man daring to approach him, while, grinding his teeth and foaming like a furious wild boar, he drove back with his battle-axe the assailing squadrons, slaying the foremost of them, to the eternal renown of his courage. If but a hundred like himself had been with him, a whole army had never been able to capture his person; yet, single-handed as he was, he held out till first his battle-axe brake, and afterwards his sword shivered in his grasp, with the force of his own resistless blows; though he was borne backward to his knees by a great stone, which by some ignoble person was flung at him. A stout knight, William of Kames, then seized him by the helmet, and holding the point of his sword to his throat, called upon him to surrender."<sup>5</sup>

Even in that extremity Stephen refused to give up the fragment of his sword to any one but the earl of Gloucester, his valiant kinsman, who, coming up, bade his infuriated troops refrain from further violence, and conducted his royal captive to the empress Matilda, at Gloucester. The earl of Gloucester, it is said, treated Stephen with some degree of courtesy; but the empress Matilda, whose hatred appears to have emanated

<sup>1</sup> Malmsbury. Rapin. Speed.

<sup>2</sup> Polydore Vergil. Speed. Malmsbury.

<sup>3</sup> Roger Hoveden. H. Huntingdon. Polychronicon.

<sup>4</sup> Roger Hoveden. H. Huntingdon. Speed. <sup>5</sup> H. Huntingdon. Speed. Rapin.

from a deeper root of bitterness than mere rivalry of power, loaded him with indignities, and ordered him into the most rigorous confinement, in Bristol castle. According to general historians, she caused him to be heavily ironed, and used the royal captive as ignominiously as if he had been the lowest felon; but William of Malmsbury says, "this was not till after Stephen had attempted to make his escape, or it was reported that he had been seen several times beyond the bounds prescribed for air and exercise."

The empress Matilda made her public and triumphant entry into the city of Winchester, February 7, where she was received with great state by Stephen's equally haughty brother, Henry de Blois, bishop of Winchester, and cardinal legate. He appeared at the head of all the clergy and monks of the diocese; and even the nuns of Winchester (a thing before unheard of) walked unveiled in the procession, to receive and welcome the rightful heiress of the realm, the daughter of the great and learned Henry Fitz-Conqueror, and of Matilda, the descendant of the Atheling. The English had also the satisfaction of seeing the male representative of their ancient monarchs on that occasion within the walls of Winchester; for David of Scotland, the son of Margaret of Atheling, was present, to do honour to his niece,—the victorious rival of Stephen's crown. Henry de Blois resigned the regal ornaments, and the paltry residue of her father's treasure, into the hands of the empress. The next day he received her with great pomp in his cathedral church, where he excommunicated all the adherents of his unfortunate brother, and promised absolution to all who should abandon his cause and join the empress.<sup>1</sup>

In this melancholy position did queen Matilda find her husband's cause, when she returned from her successful negotiation, of the marriage between the French king's sister, and her son the young count of Boulogne, whom she had left, for the present, established as duke of Normandy. The peers and clergy had alike abandoned the luckless<sup>2</sup> Stephen in his adversity; and the archbishop of Canterbury, being a man of tender conscience, had actually visited Stephen in prison, to request his permission to transfer his oath of allegiance to his victorious rival, the empress Matilda.

In this predicament, the faithful consort of the fallen monarch applied herself to the citizens of London, with whom she had ever maintained a great share of popularity. They knew her virtues, for she had lived among them; and her tender affection for her royal spouse in his adversity, was well pleasing to those who had witnessed the domestic happiness of the princely pair, while they lived in Tower-Royal, as count and countess of Boulogne; and the remembrance of Stephen's free and pleasant conduct, and affable association with all sorts and conditions of men, before he wore the thorny diadem of a doubtful title to the sovereignty of England, disposed the magistracy of London to render every

<sup>1</sup> Rudborne's Hist. of Winchester.

<sup>2</sup> *Gesta Stephani*. Gervase. Malmsbury. Rapin.

<sup>3</sup> Malmsbury. Huntingdon. Ger. Dor.



assistance in their power to their unfortunate king.<sup>1</sup> So powerfully, indeed, had the personal influence of queen Matilda operated in that quarter, that when the magistrates of London were summoned to send their deputies to a synod at Winchester, held by Henry de Blois, which had predetermined the election of the empress Matilda to the throne, they instructed them to demand the liberation of the king in the name of the barons and citizens of London, as a preliminary to entering into any discussion with the partisans of his enemy. Henry de Blois replied, "that it did not become the Londoners to side with the adherents of Stephen, whose object was to embroil the kingdom in fresh troubles."<sup>2</sup>

Queen Matilda, finding that the trusty citizens of London were baffled by the priestly subtlety of her husband's brother, Henry de Blois, took the decided, but at that time unprecedented, step, of writing, in her own name, an eloquent letter to the synod, earnestly entreating those in whose hands the government of England was vested, to restore the king, her husband, to liberty.

This letter the queen's faithful chaplain, Christian, delivered, in full synod, to the legate Henry de Blois. The prelate, after he had perused the touching appeal of his royal sister-in-law, refused to communicate its purport to the assembly; on which Christian boldly took the queen's letter out of his hand, and read it aloud to the astonished conclave, courageously disregarding the anger and opposition of the legate, who was at that time virtually the sovereign of the realm.<sup>3</sup> Henry de Blois effectually prevented any good effect resulting from the persuasive address of the high-minded consort of his unfortunate brother, by dissolving the synod, and declaring "that the empress Matilda was lawfully elected as the domina or sovereign lady of England." The following are the words of the formula in which the declaration was delivered:

"Having first, as is fit, invoked the aid of Almighty God, we elect as lady of England and Normandy the daughter of the glorious, the rich, the good, the peaceful king Henry, and to her we promise fealty and support."<sup>4</sup>

No word is here of the good old laws—the laws of Alfred and St. Edward, or of the great charter which Henry I. agreed to observe. The empress was the leader of the Norman party, and the head of Norman feudality, which, in many instances, was incompatible with the Saxon constitution.

Arrogant and disdainful as her imperial education had rendered her, she bore those new honours with anything but meekness; she refused to listen to the counsel of her friends, and treated those of her adversaries whom misfortune drove to seek her clemency with insolence and cruelty, stripping them of their possessions, and rendering them perfectly desperate. The friends who had contributed to her elevation frequently met with a harsh refusal when they asked favours; "and," says an old historian, "when they bowed themselves down before her, she did not rise in return."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Malmsbury. Rapin.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Gesta Stephani Regis.

<sup>5</sup> Gesta Stephani Regis. Thierry.

Meantime the sorrowful queen Matilda was unremitting in her exertions for the liberation of her unfortunate lord, who was at this time heavily ironed, and ignominiously treated, by order of the empress.<sup>1</sup> Not only England, but Normandy, was now lost to the captive monarch her husband, and their young heir, prince Eustace; for Geoffrey of Anjou, as soon as he received intelligence of the decisive battle of Lincoln, persuaded the Norman baronage to withdraw their allegiance from their recently invested duke, and to transfer it to his wife the empress, and her son Henry, certainly the rightful heirs of William the Conqueror. The loss of regal state and sovereign power was, however, regarded by the queen of Stephen as a matter of little moment. In the season of adversity, it was not the king, but the man, the husband of her youth, and the father of her children, to whom the tender-hearted Matilda of Boulogne clung, with a devotion not often to be met with in the personal history of royalty. It was for his sake that she condescended to humble herself, by addressing the most lowly entreaties to her haughty cousin, the empress Matilda—to her, who, if the report of some contemporary chroniclers is to be credited, had betrayed her husband into a breach of his marriage vow. The insulting scorn with which the empress rejected every petition which the wedded wife of Stephen presented to her, in behalf of her fallen foe, looks like the vindictive spirit of a jealous woman; especially, when we reflect, that not only the virtues of Matilda of Boulogne, but the closeness of her consanguinity to herself, required her to be treated with some degree of consideration and respect.

There appears even to be a covert reference to the former position in which these princesses had stood, as rivals in Stephen's love, by the proposal made by his fond queen. She proposed, if his life were but spared, to relinquish his society, and that he should not only for ever forego all claims upon the crown and succession of England and Normandy, but, taking upon himself the vows and habit of a monk, devote himself to a religious life, either as a pilgrim or a cloistered anchorite,<sup>2</sup> on condition that their son, prince Eustace, might be permitted to enjoy, in her right, the earldom of Boulogne, and his father's earldom of Mortagne, the grant of Henry I. This petition was rejected by the victorious empress, with no less contempt than all the others which Stephen's queen had ventured to prefer, although her suit in this instance was backed by the powerful mediation of Henry de Blois. This prelate, who appears to have thought more of peace than of brotherhood, was not only desirous of settling public order on such easy terms for his new sovereign, but willing to secure to his nephew the natural inheritance of his parents, of which the empress's party had obtained possession. So blind, however, was this obdurate princess, in pursuing the headlong impulse of her vindictive nature, that nothing could induce her to perceive how much it was her interest to grant the prayer of her unhappy cousin; and she repulsed the suit of Henry de Blois so rudely, that, when next summoned to her presence, he refused to come. Queer

<sup>1</sup> *Malmsbury. Speed.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ypodigma Neustria. Speed. Rapin.*

Matilda improved this difference between her haughty rival and her brother-in-law, to her own advantage; and, having obtained a private interview with him, she prevailed on him, by the eloquence of her tears and entreaties, to absolve all her husband's party, whom, as pope's legate, he had a few days before excommunicated, and to enter into a negotiation with her for the deliverance of his brother.<sup>1</sup>

Nor did the queen Matilda rest here. In the name of her son, prince Eustace, aided by William of Ypres, Stephen's able but unpopular minister of state, she raised the standard of her captive lord, in Kent and Surrey, where a strong party was presently organized in his favour; and finding that there was nothing to be hoped for from her obdurate kinswoman, the empress Matilda, on any other terms but the unreasonable one of giving up her own fair inheritance, she, like a true daughter of the heroic house of Boulogne, and the niece of the illustrious Godfrey and Baldwin, prepared herself for a struggle, with such courageous energy of mind and promptitude of action, that many a recreant baron was shamed into quitting the inglorious shelter of his castle, and leading forth his vassals to strengthen the muster of the royal heroine.

In the pages of superficially written histories, much is said of the prowess and military skill displayed by prince Eustace at this period; but Eustace was scarcely seven years old, at the time when these efforts were made for the deliverance of his royal sire. It is, therefore, plain to those who reflect on the evidence of dates, that it was the high-minded and prudent queen, his mother, who avoided all Amazonian display, by acting under the name of her son.

Her feminine virtues, endearing qualities, and conjugal devotion, had already created the most powerful interest in her favour; while reports of the pride and hardness of heart of her stern relative and namesake, the new domina, began to be industriously circulated through the land, by the offended legate, Henry de Blois.<sup>2</sup>

William of Malmesbury mentions expressly, that the empress Matilda never bore or received the title of *regina*, or queen of England, but that of *domina*, or lady of England. On her broad seal, which she caused to be made for her royal use at Winchester, she entitles herself, "*Romanorum Regina Matildis*;" and in a charter granted by her, just after the death of her brother and champion, Robert earl of Gloucester, she styles herself "*Regina Romanorum, et Domina Anglorum*."

The seal to which we have just alluded bears the figure of the granddaughter of the Norman conqueror, crowned and seated on the King's Bench, with a sceptre in her right hand, but bearing neither orb nor dove, the symbols of sovereign power and mercy. She was not an anointed queen, neither had the crown-royal ever been placed on her brow.<sup>3</sup> The garland of *fleur de lis*, by which the folds of her matronly

<sup>1</sup> Speed. Tyrrell.

<sup>2</sup> Tyrrell.

<sup>3</sup> We are indebted to our kind friend, Mr. Howard, of Corby Castle, for a drawing of the impression of another seal pertaining to Matilda the empress, delineated by Miss Mary Aglionby from a deed belonging to her family. The head-dress of the empress is simpler than that above-mentioned, the veil being confined by a mere twisted fillet, such as we see beneath helmets and crests in

wimple are confined, is of a simpler form than the royal diadems of the Anglo-Norman sovereigns, as shown on the broad seals of William Rufus, Henry I., and Stephen. Probably an alteration would have been made, if the coronation of Matilda, as sovereign of England, had ever taken place. But the consent of the city of London was an indispensable preliminary to her inauguration; and to London she proceeded in person, to obtain this important recognition. Though the majority of the city authorities were disposed to favour the cause of Stephen, for the sake of his popular consort, Matilda of Boulogne, the Saxon citizens, when they heard, "that the daughter of Molde, their good queen," claimed their homage, looked with reverence on her elder claim, and threw open their gates to receive her with every manifestation of affection.

The first sentence addressed to them by this haughty claimant of the crown of St. Edward, was the demand of an enormous subsidy.

The citizens of London replied, by inquiring after the great charter granted by her father.

"Ye are very impudent to mention privileges and charters to me, when ye have just been supporting my enemies," was the gracious rejoinder.<sup>1</sup>

Her prudent and gallant brother, Robert of Gloucester, who stood by her side, immediately perceiving that the citizens of London stood aghast, at this intimation, of their new sovereign's intention, to treat them as a conquered people, endeavoured to divert the public rage, by a most discreet speech, beginning with this complimentary address:—

"Ye citizens of London, who of olden time were called barons——"

Although the valiant Robert was a most complete and graceful orator, we have no space for his speeches, so carefully preserved by the contemporary historians, nor could all his conciliatory eloquence draw the attention of the Londoners from the harshness of their new liege lady.

Her uncle, king David, was present at this scene, and earnestly persuaded the empress to adopt a more popular line of conduct, but in vain.<sup>2</sup>

The Londoners craved leave to retire to their hall of common council, in order to provide the subsidy.

The empress-dominæ was waiting in full security at the new palace at Westminster, built by her uncle William, the Red King, till the deputies from the city of London should approach, to offer on their knees the bags of gold she had demanded; when suddenly the bells of London rang out an alarum, and from every house in London and its vicinity issued a man with a sword in his hand. "Just," says the old chronicler, "like bees swarming round the hive when it is attacked." A formidable army soon gathered in the streets, ready to defend themselves from de-

heraldic blazonry. The inscription, in Roman letters, is S·MATHIDIS·DEI·GRATIA·ROMANORUM·REGINA. The manner of sitting, and the arrangement of the drapery on the knees, resemble the portrait of the mother of the empress described in her memoir.

<sup>1</sup> J. P. Andrews.

<sup>2</sup> Carruthers' Hist. of Scotland, p. 341.

mands of subsidies and all other grievances. The empress-domina, with her Norman and Angevin chevaliers, by no means liked the idea of charging this possé in their own crooked and narrow streets, where chivalric evolutions could avail but little. They therefore mounted their steeds, and fled. Scarcely had they cleared the suburbs, when a troop of citizens broke open the doors of the palace, and finding no one there, plundered the effects left behind.

The empress, with her barons and chevaliers, galloped on the road to Oxford; and when they had arrived there, her train had become so small with numerous desertions, that, with the exception of Robert of Gloucester, she entered it alone.

Her uncle, king David, who left London with her, would have lost either his life or liberty, but for the fidelity of his godson, David Oliphaunt. Thoroughly disgusted with the obstinacy and haughtiness of his niece, he made the best of his way to his own borders. It is said that he held her ever after in low estimation.

A strong reaction of popular feeling in favour of Stephen, or rather of Stephen's queen, followed this event. The counties of Kent and Surrey were already her own, and prepared to support her by force of arms; and the citizens of London joyfully received her within their walls once more. Henry de Blois had been induced, more than once, to meet his royal sister-in-law secretly, at Guildford. Thither she brought the young prince, her son,<sup>1</sup> to assist her in moving his powerful uncle to lend his aid, in replacing her husband on the throne. Henry de Blois, touched by the tears and entreaties of these interesting supplicants, and burning with rage at the insolent treatment he had received from the imperial virago, whom Camden quaintly styles "a niggish old wife," solemnly promised the queen to forsake the cause of her rival.

Immediately on his return to Winchester, the prelate fortified his castle, and having prepared all things for declaring himself in favour of his brother, he sent messengers to the queen, begging her to put herself at the head of the Kentishmen and Londoners, and march with her son, prince Eustace, to Winchester.<sup>2</sup>

The empress Matilda, and the earl of Gloucester, having some intelligence of Henry de Blois' proceedings, advanced from Oxford, accompanied by David, king of Scotland, at the head of an army, to overawe him. When they approached the walls of Winchester, the empress sent a herald to the legate, requesting a conference, as she had something of importance to communicate; but to this requisition Henry de Blois only replied, "*Parabo me*,"<sup>3</sup> that is, "I will prepare myself;" and finding that the Norman party in Winchester were at present too strong for him, he left the city, and retired to his strong castle in the suburbs; causing, at the same time, so unexpected an attack to be made on the empress, that she had a hard race to gain the shelter of the royal citadel.<sup>4</sup>

Queen Matilda, with her son and sir William Ypres, at the head of the Londoners and the Kentishmen, were soon after at the gates of Winchester; and the empress was now so closely blockaded in her palace,

<sup>1</sup> Tyrrell.<sup>2</sup> Malmsbury. Gervase.<sup>3</sup> Malmsbury.<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

that she had ample cause to repent of her vindictive folly, in driving her gentle cousin to desperate measures, by repulsing the humble boon she had craved with such earnest prayers. For nearly two months the most destructive warfare, of famine, fire, and sword, was carried on in the streets of Winchester; till the empress Matilda, dreading the balls of fire which were nightly thrown from the legate's castle, and which had already destroyed upwards of twenty stately churches and several monasteries, prevailed on her gallant brother to provide for her retreat. This he and her uncle David, king of Scotland, did, by forcing their way through the besiegers at swords' points; but it was at the cost of the noble earl's liberty. While the empress and the king of Scotland, by dint of hard riding, escaped to Lutgershall, the earl of Gloucester arrested the pursuit, by facing about and battling on the way, till almost all his followers were slain, and he was compelled to surrender, after a desperate defence. This skirmish took place on the 14th of September, 1141. The earl of Gloucester was conducted to queen Matilda at Winchester, and she with great joy committed him to the charge of William of Ypres, as a sure hostage for the safety of the king her husband.

The wife of king Stephen obtained the praise and admiration of all parties, by her generous conduct to her illustrious captive; for, instead of loading him with chains, and subjecting him to the same cruel treatment under which her beloved lord was suffering, the confinement of the earl of Gloucester, at Rochester Castle, was alleviated by every indulgence consistent with the safe custody of his person.<sup>1</sup>

The empress and her party, with some difficulty, fled from Lutgershall to Devizes, where she was so closely pursued by the queen's troops, that she only escaped their vigilance by personating a corpse, wrapped in grave-clothes, and being placed in a coffin, which was bound with cords, and borne on the shoulders of some of her trusty partisans<sup>2</sup> to Gloucester, the stronghold of her valiant brother, where she arrived, faint and weary, with long fasting and mortal terror.

Her party was so dispirited by the loss of her approved counsellor and trusty champion, the earl of Gloucester, that she was compelled to make some overtures to the queen, her cousin, for his release; but Matilda would hear of no other terms than the restoration of her captive husband, king Stephen, in exchange for him. This the empress peremptorily refused in the first instance, though she offered a large sum of gold, and twelve captive earls of Stephen's party, as her brother's ransom. Queen Matilda was inflexible in her determination, never to resign her illustrious prisoner, on any other condition than the release of her royal husband. Although she had treated the captive earl most humanely, she now had recourse to threats; and she caused the countess of Gloucester to be informed, that unless the king were speedily exchanged for the earl, she should cause him to be transported to one of her strong castles in Boulogne,<sup>3</sup> there to be kept as rigorously as Stephen had been by the orders of the empress and her party. Not that it

<sup>1</sup> Lingard (from Malmsbury), fourth edition, p. 178.

<sup>2</sup> Brompton. John of Tinemouth. Gervase. Knighton.

<sup>3</sup> Malmsbury.

was in the gentle nature of the queen to have made these harsh reprisals on a gallant gentleman, whom the fortune of war had placed at her disposal; nor did she proceed to the use of threats till she had tried, by eloquent entreaties, to win earl Robert to use his influence with his sister, for the release of her husband. She had even promised that he should be restored to all his possessions and honours, and entrusted with the principal administration of the government, if he would conclude a peace, securing England to Stephen, and Normandy to the empress.<sup>1</sup> Gloucester's high principles, however, would not admit of his entering into any treaty which he considered prejudicial to his sister's interest; and, essential as his presence was to her, the obdurate temper of the empress would never have suffered her to purchase his release, at the price of restoring Stephen to his queen and friends, had it not been for the resolute determination displayed by her sister-in-law, Aimabel, countess of Gloucester. Fortunately, the person of Stephen happened to be in the possession of this lady, who was the castellaine of Bristol during the captivity of Gloucester, her redoubted lord. Her anxiety for his restoration being no less than that of the queen for the liberation of Stephen, these two ladies contrived to arrange a sort of amicable treaty, which ended in the exchange of their illustrious prisoners.<sup>2</sup> This memorable event took place in the month of November. 1141.

Queen Matilda was not long permitted to enjoy the re-union which took place between her and her beloved consort, after she had succeeded in procuring his deliverance from the fetters of her vindictive rival; for nothing could induce the empress to listen to any terms of pacification, and the year 1142 commenced with a mutual renewal of hostilities between the belligerent parties.

While Stephen was pursuing the war at York, with the fury of a newly enfranchised lion, he was seized with a dangerous malady. His affectionate queen hastened to him on the first news of his sickness, which was so sore, that for some hours he was supposed to be dead, and was only restored to life by the indefatigable care of his faithful consort. In all probability his illness was a return of the lethargic complaint with which he had once or twice been afflicted, at the commencement of the internal troubles of his realm.

Through the tender attentions of his queen, Stephen was, however, soon after able to take the field again; which he did with such success, that the empress's party thought it high time to claim the assistance of Geoffrey, count of Anjou, who was now exercising the functions of duke of Normandy. Geoffrey, who had certainly been treated by his imperial spouse, her late father king Henry, and her English partisans, as "a fellow of no reckoning," thought proper to stand on ceremony, and required the formality of an invitation, preferred by the earl of Gloucester in person, before he would either come himself, or part with the precious heir of England and Normandy, prince Henry. The empress, impatient to embrace her first-born son, and to obtain the Angevin and Norman

<sup>1</sup> Malmesbury.

<sup>2</sup> Malmesbury. Speed.

succours to strengthen her party, prevailed upon her brother to undertake this mission, to which he was also urged by all the empress's adherents.

Gloucester left her, as he thought, safe in the almost impregnable castle of Oxford, and embarked for Normandy. As soon as he was gone, the memorable siege of Oxford took place, which was pushed by Stephen with the greatest ardour, in the hope of capturing the empress. But when the besieged were reduced to such distress for want of provision, that a surrender was inevitable, the haughty domina, by a shrewd exercise of female ingenuity, eluded the vengeance of her exasperated rival. One night she, with only four attendants, clothed in white garments, stole through a postern that opened upon the river Thames, which at that time was thickly frozen over and covered with snow.<sup>1</sup> The white draperies in which the empress and her little train were enveloped from head to foot, prevented the sentinels from distinguishing their persons, as they crept along with noiseless steps under the snow-banks, till they were at a sufficient distance from the castle to exert their speed. They then fled with headlong haste, through the blinding storms that drifted full in their faces, as they scampered over hedges and ditches, and heaps of snow and ice, till they reached Abington, a distance of six miles, where they took horse, and arrived safely at Wallingford the same night.<sup>2</sup> The Saxon annals aver, that the empress was let down from one of the towers of Oxford Castle, by a long rope, and that she fled on foot all the long weary miles to Wallingford.

At Wallingford the empress was welcomed by her faithful brother, Robert of Gloucester, who had just returned from Normandy with her son prince Henry; "at the sight of whom," says the chroniclers, "she was so greatly comforted, that she forgot all her troubles and mortifications, for the joy she had of his presence."<sup>3</sup> Thus we see that the sternest natures are accessible to the tender influences of maternal love, powerful in the heart of an empress as in that of a peasant.

Geoffrey count of Anjou, having no great predilection for the company of his Juno, thought proper to remain in Normandy with his son, the younger Geoffrey of Anjou.

After three years of civil strife, during which the youthful Henry learned the science of arms under the auspices of his redoubted uncle, the earl of Gloucester, the count of Anjou sent a splendid train of Norman and Angevin nobles to England, to reclaim his heir. Earl Robert of Gloucester accompanied his princely *élève* to Warham, where they parted,<sup>4</sup> never to meet again; for the brave earl died of a fever at Gloucester, October 31, 1147, and was interred at Bristol. With this great man, and true-hearted brother, died the hopes of the empress Matilda's party for the present, and she soon after quitted England, having alienated all her friends, by the ungovernable violence of her temper, and her overweening haughtiness. The great secret of government consists mainly in an accurate knowledge of the human heart, by which princes

<sup>1</sup> M. Paris. W. Malmsbury. Sim. Dunelm. Ypodigma Neustria.

<sup>2</sup> Ypodigma Neustria. Malmsbury. Speed. Rapin.

<sup>3</sup> Gervase.

<sup>4</sup> Chronicle of Chester, as cited by Tyrrell.



acquire the art of conciliating the affections of those around them, and, by graceful condescensions, win the regard of the lower orders, of whom the great body of the nation, emphatically called "the people," is composed. The German education, and the self-sufficiency, of the empress, prevented her from considering the importance of these things, and, as a matter of course, she failed in obtaining the great object for which she contended.

"Away with her!" was the cry of the English population; "we will not have this Norman woman to reign over us."<sup>1</sup>

Yet this unpopular claimant of the throne was the only surviving child and representative of their adored queen Matilda, the daughter of a Saxon princess, the descendant of the great Alfred. But the virtues of Matilda of Scotland, her holy spirit, and her graces of mind and manners, had been inherited, not by her daughter, (who had been removed in her tender childhood from under the maternal influence,) but by her niece and name-child, Matilda of Boulogne, who was undoubtedly educated under her wise superintendence, and exhibited all the excellence of her prototype. The younger queen Matilda was, however, not only one of the best, but one of the greatest, women of the age in which she lived. That she was perfect in that which we have shown to be the most important of all royal accomplishments — the art of pleasing — that art in which her haughty cousin the empress was so little skilled — was acknowledged even by that diplomatic statesman-priest, Henry de Blois; and she was of more effectual service in her husband's cause, than the swords of the foreign army which Stephen had rashly called to the support of his tottering throne.

Stephen and Matilda kept their Christmas this year, 1147, at Lincoln, with uncommon splendour, for joy of the departure of their unwelcome kinswoman the empress Matilda, and the re-establishment of the public peace; and so completely did Stephen consider himself a king again, that, in defiance of certain oracular denouncements of evil, to any monarch of England who should venture to wear his crown in that city on Christmas-day, he attended mass in his royal robes and diadem, against the advice of his sagest counsellors, both temporal and spiritual.<sup>2</sup> While at Lincoln, prince Eustace, the son of Stephen and Matilda, (then in his thirteenth year,) received the oath of fealty from such of the barons as could be prevailed upon to acknowledge him as heir-apparent to the throne. Stephen and Matilda were desirous of his being crowned at Lincoln, in hopes of securing to him the right of succession; but the nobles would not consent.

The mind of queen Matilda appears, during the year 1148, to have been chiefly directed to devotional matters. It was in this year that she carried into execution her long-cherished design, of founding and endowing the hospital and church of St. Katherine, by the Tower,<sup>3</sup> for the repose of the souls of her deceased children, Baldwin and Maud.

<sup>1</sup> Thierry's Anglo-Norman History.

<sup>2</sup> Gervase. Speed.

<sup>3</sup> This royal institution, which, under the fostering protection of the queens of England, has survived the fall of every other monastic foundation of the older times, has been transplanted to the Regent's Park, and affords a delightful asy

The same year queen Matilda, jointly with Stephen, founded the royal abbey of Feversham in Kent, and personally superintended its erection. For many months she resided in the nunnery of St. Austin's, Canterbury, to watch the progress of the work,<sup>1</sup> it being her desire to be interred within that stately church, which she had planned with such noble taste. There is great probability that she was at this time in declining health, having gone through many sore trials and fatigues, both of mind and body, during the long protracted years of civil war. The repose of cloistered seclusion, and heavenward employment in works of piety and benevolence, whereby the royal Matilda sought to charm away the excitement of the late fierce struggle, in which she had been forced to take so active a part, were succeeded by fresh anxieties, of a political nature, caused by the return of the young Henry Fitz-Empress in the following year (1149), and by the evident intention of her uncle, David of Scotland, to support his claims. The king her husband, apprehending that an attack on the city of York was meditated, flew to arms once more; on which David, after conferring knighthood on his youthful kinsman, retired into Scotland, and prince Henry returned to Normandy, not feeling himself strong enough to bide the event of a battle with Stephen at that period.<sup>2</sup>

A brief interval of tranquillity succeeded the departure of these invading kinsmen; but queen Matilda lived not long to enjoy it. Worn out with cares and anxieties, this amiable princess closed her earthly pilgrimage at Heningham Castle in Essex, the mansion of Alberic de Vere, where she died of a fever, May 3d, 1151, in the fifteenth year of her husband's reign. Stephen was forty-seven years old at the time of this his irreparable loss; Matilda was probably about the same age, or a little younger.

This lamented queen was interred in the newly erected abbey of Feversham, of which she had been so munificent a patroness, having endowed it with her own royal manor of Lillechurch, which she gave to William of Ypres for his demesne of Feversham, the spot chosen by her as the site of this noble monastic establishment, which was dedicated to St. Saviour, and filled with black monks of Cluni.

The most valued of all the gifts presented by queen Matilda to her favourite abbey, was a portion of the holy cross, which had been sent by her illustrious uncle, Godfrey of Boulogne, from Jerusalem, and was, therefore, regarded as doubly precious, none but heretics presuming to doubt of its being "*vera crux*."<sup>3</sup>

"Here," says that indefatigable antiquary, Weever, "lies interred Maud, wife of king Stephen, the daughter of Eustace earl of Boulogne (brother of Godfrey and Baldwin, kings of Jerusalem), by Mary Atheling (sister to Matilda Atheling, wife to Henry, her husband's predecessor

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lum and ample maintenance for a limited number of those favoured ladies who, preferring a life of maiden meditation and independence to the care-worn paths of matrimony, are fortunate enough to obtain sisterships. A nun of St. Katherine may truly be considered in a state of single-blessedness.

<sup>1</sup> Stowe.

<sup>2</sup> Roger Hoveden.

<sup>3</sup> Robert of Gloucester.

sor). She died at Heningham Castle in Essex, the 3d of May, 1151; whose epitaph I found in a nameless manuscript."

"Anno milleno C. quinquagenoque primo,  
 Quo sua non minuit, sed sibi nostra tulit,  
 Mathildis felix conjux Stephani quoque Regis  
 Occidit, insignis moribus et titulis;  
 Cultrix vera Dei, cultrix et pauperiei.  
 Hic subnixa Deo, quo fruereetur eo.  
 Femina si qua Polos consendere queque meretur,  
 Angelicis manibus diva hæc Regina tenetur."

The monastic Latin of this inscription may be thus rendered:—"In the year one thousand one hundred and fifty-one, not to her own, but to our great loss, the happy Matilda, the wife of king Stephen, died, ennobled by her virtues as by her titles. She was a true worshipper of God, and a real patroness of the poor. She lived submissive to God, that she might afterwards enjoy his presence. If ever woman deserved to be carried by the hands of angels to heaven, it was this holy queen."

Queen Matilda left three surviving children, by her marriage with Stephen: Eustace, William, and Mary.

The eldest, prince Eustace, was, after her death, despatched by Stephen to the court of his royal brother-in-law, Louis VII., to solicit his assistance in recovering the duchy of Normandy, which, on the death of Geoffrey of Anjou, had reverted to Henry Fitz-Empress, the rightful heir. Louis, who had good reason for displeasure against Henry, re-invested Eustace with the duchy, and received his homage once more. Stephen then, in the hope of securing this beloved son's succession to the English throne, endeavoured to prevail on the archbishop of Canterbury to crown him, as the acknowledged heir of England. But neither the archbishop, nor any other prelate, could be induced to perform this ceremony, lest, as they said, "they should be the means of involving the kingdom once more in the horrors of civil war."<sup>1</sup>

According to some historians, Stephen was so exasperated at this refusal, that he shut all the bishops up in one house, declaring his intention to keep them in ward, till one or other of them yielded obedience to his will. The archbishop of Canterbury, however, succeeded in making his escape to Normandy, and persuaded Henry Plantagenet, who, by his marriage with Eleanor duchess of Aquitaine, the divorced queen of France, had become a powerful prince, to try his fortune once more in England.

Henry, who had now assumed the titles of duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, and count of Anjou, landed in England, January 1153, before preparations were made to oppose his victorious progress. He marched directly to the relief of his mother's friends, at Wallingford, and arrived at a time when Eustace was carrying on operations, in the absence of the king his father, who had gone to London, to procure fresh supplies of men and money. Eustace maintained his position till the return of Stephen, when the hostile armies drew up in battle-array, with the in

<sup>1</sup> Rapin.

tention of deciding the question between the rival claimants of the crown, at swords' points. An accidental circumstance prevented the deadly effusion of kindred blood, that seemed as if doomed to stain the snows of the wintry plain of Egilaw. "That day Stephen's horse," says Matthew Paris, "reared furiously thrice, as he advanced to the front to array his battle, and thrice fell with his fore-feet flat to the earth, and threw his royal rider. The nobles exclaimed it was a portent of evil, and the men murmured among themselves ;<sup>1</sup> on which the great William de Albini, the widower of the late dowager queen Adelicia, took advantage of the pause, which this superstitious panic on the part of Stephen's adherents had created, to address the king on the horrors of civil war, and reminding him of the weakness of his cause, and the justice of that of his opponent, implored him to avoid the effusion of his subjects' blood, by entering into an amicable arrangement with Henry Plantagenet."

Stephen and Henry, accordingly, met for a personal conference, in a meadow at Wallingford, with the river Thames flowing between their armies, and there settled the terms of pacification, whereby Stephen was to enjoy the crown during his life, on condition of solemnly guaranteeing the succession to Henry Plantagenet, to the exclusion of his own children.<sup>2</sup> Henry, on his part, swore to confirm to them the earldom of Boulogne, the inheritance of their mother, the late queen Matilda, and all the personal property and possessions enjoyed by Stephen, during the reign of his uncle, Henry I. After the treaty was ratified, William de Albini first affixing his sign manual, as the head of the barons, by the style and title of William earl of Chichester,<sup>3</sup> Stephen unbraced his armour, in token of peace, and Henry saluted him as "king," adding the endearing name of "father ;" and if Polydore Vergil, and other chroniclers who relate this incident, are to be believed, not without good reason.

Of a more romantic character, however, is the circumstantial account of the cause of this pacification, as related by that courtly historian, Matthew Paris, which, though he only mentions it as a report, is of too remarkable a nature to be omitted here. We give the passage in his own words :—

"The empress, they say, who had rather have been Stephen's paramour than his foe, when she saw him and her son arrayed against each other, and their armies ready to engage on Egilaw Heath, caused king Stephen to be called aside, and coming boldly up to him, she said,—

"What mischievous and unnatural thing go ye about to do? Is it meet the father should destroy the son, or the son kill the sire? For the love of the most high God, fling down your weapons from your hands, sith that (as thou well knowest) he is indeed thine own son: for you well know how we twain were acquaint before I wedded Geoffrey! The king knew her words to be sooth, and so came the peace."<sup>4</sup>

The most doubtful part of this story is, that the empress is represented as making this communication personally to Stephen, yet no other historian mentions that she was in England at this period, much less that

<sup>1</sup> Henry of Huntingdon. Lord Lyttleton. Speed. Tierney's Arundel.

<sup>2</sup> Tierney's Arundel. Matthew Paris. Speed.

<sup>3</sup> Tierney's Arundel.

<sup>4</sup> Matthew Paris.

she was the author of the pacification. Lord Lyttleton, however, in his history of Henry II., says, "that at one of his interviews with Stephen, previous to the settlement of the succession on Henry, that prince is stated by an old author to have claimed the king for his father, on the confession of the empress, when she supposed herself to be on a death-bed." Rapin also mentions the report. That which lends most colour to the tale, is the fact, that the empress Matilda's second son Geoffrey, on the death of his father, set up a claim to the earldom of Anjou, grounded on the supposed illegitimacy of prince Henry. This ungracious youth even went so far as to obtain the testimony of the Angevin barons, who witnessed the last moments of the count his father, to the assertion "that the expiring Geoffrey named him as the successor to his dominions, because he suspected his elder brother to be the son of Stephen."<sup>1</sup>

Prince Eustace was so much enraged at the manner in which his interests had been compromised by the treaty of Wallingford, that he withdrew, in a transport of indignation, from the field, and gathering together a sort of free company, of the malcontent adherents of his father's party, he marched towards Bury St. Edmund's, ravaging and laying under contribution all the country through which he passed. The monks of Bury received him honourably, and offered to refresh his men, but he sternly replied, "That he came not for meat but money," and demanded a subsidy, which being denied by the brethren of St. Edmund—"they being unwilling," they said, "to be the means of raising fresh civil wars, which fell heavily on all peaceably disposed men, but heaviest of all on the clergy"—Eustace, reckless of all moral restraints, instantly plundered the monastery, and ordered all the corn and other provisions belonging to these civil and hospitable ecclesiastics to be carried to his own castle, near the town; and "then sitting down to dinner in a frenzy of rage, the first morsel of meat he essayed to swallow choked him," says the chronicler, who relates this act of wrong and violence. According to some historians, Eustace died of a brain fever, on the 10th of August, 1153.<sup>2</sup> His body was conveyed to Feversham Abbey, and was interred by the side of his mother, queen Matilda. Eustace left no children by his wife, Constance of France.

William, the third son of Stephen and Matilda, inherited his mother's earldom of Boulogne, which, together with that of Mortagne, and all his father's private property, were secured to him by the treaty of Wallingford. He is mentioned in that treaty by name, as having done homage to Henry of Anjou and Normandy. Shortly afterwards, however, this prince, though of tender age, entered into a conspiracy with some of the Flemish mercenaries, to surprise the person of prince Henry on Barham Downs, as he was riding from Dover, in company with the king. Stephen himself is not wholly clear from a suspicion of being concerned in this plot, which failed through an accident which befell prince William, for just before the assault should have taken place, he was thrown by his mettlesome steed, and had the ill luck to break his leg. Henry, on re-

<sup>1</sup> Vita Gaufredi de Normandi.

<sup>2</sup> Speed.

ceiving a secret hint of what was in agitation, took the opportunity of the confusion created by William's fall, to ride off at full speed to Canterbury, and soon after sailed for Normandy.

It does not appear that he bore any ill-will against William de Blois for this treacherous design, as he afterwards knighted him, and confirmed to him his mother's earldom, and whatever was possessed by Stephen before his accession to the throne. This prince died in the year 1160, while attending Henry II. on his return home from the siege of Thoulouse.

The lady Marie de Blois, the only surviving daughter of Stephen and Matilda, took the veil, and was abbess of the royal nunnery of Rumsey, in which her grandmother, Mary of Scotland, and her great aunt, Matilda, the good queen, were educated. When her brother William, count of Boulogne, died without issue, the people of Boulogne, desiring to have her for their countess, Matthew, the brother of Philip, count of Flanders, stole her from her convent, and, marrying her, became in her right count of Boulogne. She was his wife ten years, when, by sentence of the pope, she was divorced from him, and forced to return to her monastery. She had two daughters by this marriage, who were allowed to be legitimate; and Ida, the eldest, inherited the earldom of Boulogne, in right of her grandmother, Matilda, Stephen's queen.

Stephen died at Dover, of the iliac passion, October 25th, 1154, in the fifty-first year of his age, and the nineteenth of his reign.

He was buried by the side of his beloved queen Matilda, and their unfortunate son Eustace, in the abbey of Feversham. "His body rested here in quietness," says Stowe, "till the dissolution, when, for the trifling gain of the lead in which it was lapped, it was taken up, uncoffined, and plunged into the river:—so uncertain is man, yea, the greatest princes, of any rest in this world, even in the matter of burial." Honest old Speed, by way of conclusion to this quotation from his brother chronicler, adds this anathema: "And restless may their bodies be also, who, for filthy lucre, thus deny the dead the quiet of their graves!"

# ELEANORA OF AQUITAINE,

## QUEEN OF HENRY II.

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### CHAPTER I.

Provençal queens—Country of Eleanora of Aquitaine—Her grandfather—Death of her father—Her great inheritance—Marriage—Becomes queen of France—Beauty—She becomes a crusader—Her guard of Amazons—Eleanora and ladies encumber the army—Occasion defeat—Refuge with queen's uncle—Eleanora's coquetties—Returns to France—Her disgusts—Taunts—Henry Plantagenet—Scandals—Birth of infant princess—Eleanora falls in love with Henry—Jealousies—She applies for divorce—Her marriage dissolved—Returns to Aquitaine—Adventures on journey—Marries Henry Plantagenet—Birth of her son—Enables Henry to gain England—Henry's love for Rosamond—Returns to Eleanora—Succeeds to the English throne—Eleanora crowned at Westminster—Costume—Birth of prince Henry—Queen presents her infants to the barons—Death of eldest son—Her court—Tragedy played before her—Her husband—His character—Rosamond discovered by the queen—Eleanora's children—Birth of prince Geoffrey—Eleanora regent of England—Goes to Normandy—Conclusion of empress Matilda's memoir—Matilda regent of Normandy—Mediates peace—Dies—Tomb—Eleanora Norman regent—She goes to Aquitaine.

THE life of the consort of Henry II. commences the biographies of a series of Provençal princesses, with whom the earlier monarchs of our royal house of Plantagenet allied themselves, for upwards of a century. Important effects, not only on the domestic history of the court of England, but on its commerce and statistics, may be traced to its union, by means of this queen, with the most polished and civilized people on the face of the earth, as the Provençals of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries indisputably were. With the arts, the idealities, and the refinements of life, Eleanora brought acquisitions of more importance to the Anglo-Norman people, than even that "great Provence dower" on which Dante dwells with such earnestness.

But before the sweet provinces of the south were united to England, by the marriage of their heiress with the heir of the Conqueror, a varied tissue of incidents had chequered the life of the duchess of Aquitaine, and it is necessary to trace them, before we can describe her conduct as queen of England.

It would be in vain to search on a map for the dominions of Eleanora, under the title of dukedom of Aquitaine. In the eleventh century, the counties of Guienne and Gascony were erected into this dukedom, after

the ancient kingdom of Provence, established by a diet of Charlemagne,<sup>1</sup> had been dismembered. Julius Cæsar calls the south of Gaul, Aquitaine, from the numerous rivers and fine ports belonging to it; and the poetical population of this district adopted the name for their dukedom, from the classics.

The language which prevailed all over the south of France was called Provençal, from the kingdom of Provence; and it formed a bond of national union among the numerous independent sovereigns under whose feudal sway this beautiful country was divided. Throughout the whole tract of country, from Navarre to the dominions of the dauphin of Auvergne, and from sea to sea, the Provençal language was spoken—a language which combined the best points of French and Italian, and presented peculiar facilities for poetical composition. It was called the *langue d'oc*, sometimes *langue d'oc et no*, the tongue of “yes” and “no,” because, instead of the “*oui*” and “*non*” of the rest of France, the affirmative and negative were “*oc*” and “*no*.” The ancestors of Eleanora were called *par excellence* the lords of “*Oc*” and “*No*.” William IX., her grandfather, was one of the earliest professors and most liberal patrons of the art. His poems were models of imitation for all the succeeding troubadours.<sup>2</sup>

The descendants of this minstrel hero were Eleanora, and her sister Petronilla. They were the daughters of his son, William count de Poitou, by one of the daughters of Raymond of Thoulouse.<sup>3</sup> William of Poitou was a pious prince; which, together with his death in the Holy Land, caused his father's subjects to call him St. William. The mother of this prince was the great heiress Philippa of Thoulouse, duchess of Guienne and Gascony, and countess of Thoulouse in her own right. Before Philippa married, her husband was William, the seventh count of Poitou and Saintonge; afterwards he called himself William the fourth duke of Aquitaine. He invested his eldest son with the county of Poitou, who is termed William the tenth of Poitou. He did not live to inherit the united provinces of Poitou and Aquitaine, which comprised nearly the whole of the south of France. The rich inheritance of Thoulouse, part of the dower of the duchess Philippa, was pawned for a sum of money, to the count of St. Gilles, her cousin, which enabled her husband to undertake the expense of the crusade led by Robert of Normandy. The count St. Gilles took possession of Thoulouse, and withheld it, as a forfeited mortgage, from Eleanora, who finally inherited her grandmother's rights to this lovely province.

The father of Eleanora left Aquitaine in 1132, with his younger brother, Raymond of Poitou, who was chosen by the princes of the crusade that year to receive the hand of the heiress of Conrad prince of Antioch, and maintain that bulwark of the Holy Land against the assaults of pagans and infidels. William fell, aiding his brother in this arduous contest; but Raymond succeeded in establishing himself as prince of Antioch.

<sup>1</sup> Atlas Géographique.

<sup>2</sup> Sismondi's Literature of the South.

<sup>3</sup> *Rev. Script. de Franc.*; likewise Suger.



The grandfather of Eleonora had been gay and even licentious in his youth; and now, at the age of sixty-eight, he wished to devote some time, before his death, to meditation and penitence, for the sins of his early life. When his grand-daughter had attained her fourteenth year, he commenced his career of self-denial, by summoning the baronage of Aquitaine, and communicating his intention of abdicating in favour of his grand-daughter, to whom they all took the oath of allegiance.<sup>1</sup> He then opened his great project of uniting Aquitaine with France, by giving Eleanora in marriage to the heir of Louis le Gros.<sup>2</sup> The barons agreed to this proposal, on condition that the laws and customs of Aquitaine should be held inviolate; and that the consent of the young princess should be obtained. Eleanora had an interview with her suitor, and professed herself pleased with the arrangement.

Louis and Eleanora were immediately married with great pomp, at Bourdeaux; and, on the solemn resignation of duke William, the youthful pair were crowned duke and duchess of Aquitaine, August 1, 1137.

On the conclusion of this grand ceremony, duke William,<sup>3</sup> grandsire of the bride, laid down his robes and insignia of sovereignty, and took up the hermit's cowl and staff. He departed on a pilgrimage to St. James's of Compostenella, in Spain, and died soon after, very penitent, in one of the cells of that rocky wilderness.<sup>4</sup>

At the time when duke William resigned the dominions of the south to his grand-daughter, he was the most powerful prince in Europe. His rich ports of Bourdeaux and Saintonge supplied him with commercial wealth; his maritime power was immense; his court was the focus of learning and luxury; and it must be owned, that at the accession of the fair Eleanora, this court had become not a little licentious.

Louis and his bride obtained immediate possession of Poitou, Gascony, Biscay, and a large territory extending beyond the Pyrenees. They repaired afterwards to Poitiers, where Louis was solemnly crowned duke of Guienne.<sup>5</sup> Scarcely was this ceremony concluded,

<sup>1</sup> Suger. Ordericus Vitalis.

<sup>2</sup> Called *Le Jeune*, to distinguish him from his father Louis VI., who caused his son to be crowned in his lifetime.

<sup>3</sup> Montaigne, who speaks from his own local traditions of the south, asserts that duke William lived in his hermitage, at Montserrat, ten or twelve years, wearing, as a penance for his youthful sins, his armour under his hermit's weeds. It is said by others, that he died as a hermit, in a grotto at Florence, after having macerated his body by tremendous penances, and established the severe Order of the Guillemines.

<sup>4</sup> To this great prince, the ancestor, through Eleanora of Aquitaine, of our royal line, may be traced armorial bearings, and a war-cry, whose origin has not a little perplexed the readers of English history. The patron saint of England, St. George, was adopted from the Aquitaine dukes, as we find, from the MS. of the French herald, Gilles de Bonnier, that the duke of Aquitaine's *mot*, or war-cry, was, "St. George for the puissant duke." His crest was a leopard: and his descendants in England bore leopards on their shields till after the time of Edward I. Edward III. is called "valiant pard" in his epitaphs; and the emperor of Germany sent Henry III. a present of three leopards, expressly saying they were in compliment and allusion to his armorial bearings.

<sup>5</sup> Suger, cited by Gifford.

when Eleanora and her husband were summoned to the death-bed of Louis VI., that admirable king and lawgiver of France. His dying words were,

“Remember, royalty is a public trust, for the exercise of which a rigorous account will be exacted by Him who has the sole disposal of crowns and sceptres.”

So spoke the great legislator of France, to the youthful pair whose wedlock had united the north and south of France. On the conscientious mind of Louis VII. the words of his dying father were strongly impressed, but it was late in life before his thoughtless partner profited by them.

Eleanora was very beautiful; she had been reared in all the accomplishments of the south; she was a fine musician, and composed and sang the *chansons* and *tensons* of Provençal poetry. Her native troubadours expressly inform us that she could both read and write. The government of her dominions was in her own hands, and she frequently resided in her native capital of Bourdeaux. <sup>1</sup> She was perfectly adored by her southern subjects, who always welcomed her with joy, and they bitterly mourned her absence, when she was obliged to return to her court at Paris; a court whose morals were severe; where the rigid rule of St. Bernard was observed by the king her husband, as if his palace had been a convent. Far different was the rule of Eleanora, in the cities of the south.

The political sovereignty of her native dominions, was not the only authority exercised by Eleanora in “gay Guienne.” She was, by hereditary right, chief reviewer and critic of the poets of Provence. At certain festivals held by her, after the custom of her ancestors, <sup>1</sup> called Courts of Love, all new *sirventes* and *chansons* were sung or recited before her, by the troubadours. She then, assisted by a conclave of her ladies, sat in judgment, and pronounced sentence on their literary merits. She was herself a popular troubadour poet. Her *chansons* were remembered, long after death had raised a barrier against flattery, and she is reckoned among the authors of France. <sup>2</sup>

The amusements of the young queen of France seemed little suited to the austere habits of Louis VII.; yet she had the power of influencing him to commit the only act of wilful injustice which stains the annals of his reign.

The sister of the queen, the young Petronilla, whose beauty equalled that of her sister, and whose levity far surpassed it, could find no single man, in all France, to bewitch with the spell of her fascinations, but chose to seduce Rodolf, count of Vermandois, from his wife. This prince, who was cousin and prime minister to Louis VII., had married a sister of the count of Champagne, whom he divorced for some frivolous pretext, and married the fair Petronilla, by the connivance of Eleanora. The count of Champagne laid his sister's wrongs before the pope, who commanded Vermandois to put away Petronilla, and to take back the injured sister of Champagne. Queen Eleanora, enraged at the dishonour

<sup>1</sup> Sismondi.

<sup>2</sup> Nostradamus's History of Provence, and Du Chesne.

of Petronilla, prevailed on her husband to punish the count of Champagne for his interference. Louis, who already had cause of offence against the count, invaded Champagne at the head of a large army, and began a devastating war, in the course of which a most dreadful occurrence happened, at the storming of Vitry: the cathedral, wherein thirteen hundred persons had taken refuge, was burnt, and the poor people perished miserably.

It was at this juncture that St. Bernard preached the crusade at Vezalai, in Burgundy. King Louis and queen Eleanora, with all their court, came to hear the eloquent saint; and such crowds attended the royal auditors, that St. Bernard was forced to preach in the market-place, for no cathedral, however large, could contain them. St. Bernard touched with so much eloquence on the murderous conflagration at Vitry, that the heart of the pious king Louis, full of penitence for the sad effects of his destructiveness on his own subjects, resolved to atone for it to the God of mercy, by carrying sword and fire, to destroy thousands of his fellow-creatures, who had neither offended him, nor even heard of him. His queen, whose influence had led to the misdeed at Vitry, likewise became penitent, and as sovereign of Aquitaine, vowed to accompany her lord to the Holy Land, and lead the forces of the South to the relief of the Christian kingdom of Jerusalem.

The wise and excellent abbot, Suger, the chancellor of Louis VII, endeavoured to prevail on his royal master to relinquish his mad expedition to Syria, assuring him that it would bring ruin on his country; but the fanaticism of the king was proof against such persuasions. Moreover, the romantic idea, of becoming a female crusader, had got into the light head of Eleanora his queen; and, being at this time in the very flower of her youth and beauty, she swayed the king of France according to her will and pleasure. Suger gives us the description of the preparations Eleanora made for this campaign, which were absurd enough to raise the idea, that the good statesman was romancing, if contemporary historians had not confirmed his evidence. When queen Eleanora received the cross from St. Bernard, at Vezalai, she directly put on the dress of an Amazon; and her ladies, all actuated by the same frenzy, mounted on horseback, and forming a lightly armed squadron, surrounded the queen when she appeared in public, calling themselves queen Eleanora's body-guard. They practised Amazonian exercises, and performed a thousand follies in public, to animate their zeal as practical crusaders. By the suggestion of their young queen, this band of madwomen sent their useless distaffs, as presents, to all the knights and nobles who had the good sense to keep out of this insane expedition. This ingenious taunt had the effect of shaming many wise men out of their better resolutions; and to such a degree was this mania of the crusade carried, that, as St. Bernard himself owns, whole villages were deserted by their male inhabitants, and the land left to be tilled by women and children.

Such fellow soldiers as queen Eleanora and her Amazons, would have been quite sufficient to disconcert the plans, and impede the projects, of Hannibal himself; and though king Louis conducted himself with

great ability and courage in his difficult enterprise, no prudence could counteract the misfortune of being encumbered with an army of fantastic women. King Louis, following the course of the emperor Conrad, whose army, roused by the eloquence of St. Bernard, had just preceded them, sailed up the Bosphorus, and landed in Thrace.

The freaks of queen Eleanora and her female warriors, were the cause of all the misfortunes that befell king Louis and his army, especially in the defeat at Laodicea.<sup>1</sup> The king had sent forward the queen and her ladies, escorted by his choicest troops, under the guard of count Maurienne. He charged them to choose for their camp, the arid but commanding ground which gave them a view over the defiles of the valley of Laodicea. While this detachment was encamping, he, at the distance of five miles, brought up the rear and baggage, ever and anon turning to battle bravely with the skirmishing Arab cavalry who were harassing his march.

Queen Eleanora acted in direct opposition to his rational directions. She insisted on her detachment of the army halting, in a lovely romantic valley, full of verdant grass and gushing fountains. The king was encumbered by the immense baggage which, William of Tyre declares, the female warriors of queen Eleanora insisted on retaining in the camp, at all risks. Darkness began to fall as the king of France approached the entrance of the valley; and to his consternation, he found the heights above it unoccupied by the advanced body of his troops. Finding the queen was not encamped there, he was forced to enter the valley in search of her, and was soon after attacked from the heights by swarms of Arabs, who engaged him in the passes among the rocks, close to the fatal spot where the emperor Conrad and his heavy horse had been discomfited but a few weeks before. King Louis, sorely pressed in one part of this murderous engagement, only saved his life by climbing a tree, whence he defended himself with the most desperate valour.<sup>2</sup> At length, by efforts of personal heroism, he succeeded in placing himself between the detachment of his ladies and the Saracens. But it was not till the dawn of day that he discovered his advanced troops, encamped in the romantic valley chosen by his poetical queen. Seven thousand of the flower of French chivalry paid with their lives the penalty of their queen's inexperience in warlike tactics; all the provision was cut off; the baggage, containing the fine array of the lady-warriors, which had proved such an encumbrance to the king, was plundered by the Arabs and Saracens, and the whole army was reduced to great distress. Fortunately Antioch was near, whose prince was the uncle of the crusading queen of France. Prince Raymond opened his friendly gates to the distressed warriors of the cross, and by the beautiful streams of the Orontes the defeated French army rested and refreshed themselves, after their recent disasters.

Raymond of Poitou was brother to the queen's father, the saintly William of Poitou. There was, however, nothing of the saint in the disposition of Raymond, who was still young, and was the handsomest

<sup>1</sup> William of Tyre, Odo, and Suger.

<sup>2</sup> William of Tyre.

man of his time. The uncle and niece, who had never met before were much charmed with each other. It seems strange that the man who first awakened the jealousy of king Louis, should stand in such very near relationship to his wife; yet it is certain, that as soon as queen Eleanor had recovered her beauty, somewhat sullied by the hardships she endured in the camp, she commenced such a series of coquetries with her handsome uncle, that king Louis, greatly scandalized and incensed, hurried her out of Antioch one night, and decamped to Jerusalem, with slight leave-taking of Raymond, or none at all.

It is true, many authorities say that Raymond's intrigues with his niece were wholly political, and that he was persuading his niece to employ her power, as duchess of Aquitaine, for the extension of his dominions, and his own private advantage.

Eleanor was enraged at her sudden removal from Antioch, and entered the Holy City in a most indignant mood. Jerusalem, the object of the ardent enthusiasm of every other crusader, raised no religious ardour in her breast; she was burning with resentment, at the unaccustomed harshness king Louis exercised towards her. In Jerusalem, king Baldwin received Eleanor, with the honours due both to her rank as queen of France, and her power as a sovereign ally of the crusading league; but nothing could please her. It is not certain whether her uneasiness proceeded from a consciousness of guilt, or indignation at being the object of unfounded suspicions; but it is indisputable that, after her forced departure from Antioch, all affection between Eleanor and her husband was at an end. While the emperor of Germany and the king of France laid an unsuccessful siege to Damascus, Eleanor was detained at Jerusalem, in something like personal restraint.

The great abilities of Sultan Noureddin rendered this siege unavailing, and Louis was glad to withdraw, with the wreck of his army, from Asia. After many perils at Constantinople, and detention at Sicily, the king and queen of France arrived safely in their own dominions, 1148. There are letters<sup>1</sup> still extant from Suger, abbot of St. Denis, the minister and confidant of king Louis, by which it appears that the king had made complaints, of the criminal attachment of his queen to a young Saracen emir, of great beauty, named Sal-Addin. For this misconduct the king of France expressed his intention of obtaining a divorce immediately, but was dissuaded from this resolution by the suggestions of his sagacious minister, who pointed out to him the troubles which would accrue to France, by the relinquishment of the "great Provence dower," and that his daughter, the princess Marie, would be deprived in all probability, of her mother's rich inheritance, if the queen were a liberty to marry again.

This remonstrance so far prevailed on Louis, that from the unfortunate crusade, Eleanor resided at Paris, with all her usual state and dignity, as long as Suger lived, about four years. She was, however, closely watched, and not permitted to visit her southern dominions—a

<sup>1</sup> In the collection of Du Chesne, which has furnished much of the information in this narrative.

prohibition which greatly disquieted her. She made many complaints, of the gloom of the northern Gallic capital, and the monkish manners of her devout husband. She was particularly indignant at the plain and unostentatious clothing of king Louis, who had likewise displeased her by sacrificing, at the suggestion of the clergy, all his long curls, besides shaving off his beard and moustachios. The giddy queen made a constant mockery of her husband's appearance, and vowed that his smooth face made him look more like a cloistered priest than a valiant king.

Thus two years passed away in mutual discontent, till, in the year 1150, Geoffrey<sup>1</sup> Plantagenet, count of Anjou, appeared at the court of Louis VII. Geoffrey did homage for Normandy, and presented to Louis his son, young Henry Plantagenet, surnamed Fitz-Empress. This youth was about seventeen, and was then first seen by queen Eleanora. But the scandalous chroniclers of the day declare, the queen was much taken by the fine person and literary attainments of Geoffrey, who was considered the most accomplished knight of his time. Geoffrey was a married man; but queen Eleanora as little regarded the marriage engagements of the persons on whom she bestowed her attention, as she did her own conjugal ties.

About eighteen months after the departure of the Angevin princes, the queen of France gave birth to another princess, named Alice. Soon after this event, Henry Plantagenet once more visited Paris, to do homage for Normandy and Anjou, a pleuritic fever having suddenly carried off his father. Queen Eleanora now transferred her former partiality for the father, to the son, who had become a noble, martial-looking prince, full of energy, learned, valiant, and enterprising, and ready to undertake any conquest, whether of the heart of the gay queen of the south, or of the kingdom from which he had been unjustly disinherited.

Eleanora acted with her usual disgusting levity, in the advances she made to this youth. Her beauty was still unimpaired, though her character was in low esteem with the world. Motives of interest induced Henry to feign a return to the passion of queen Eleanora; his mother's cause was hopeless in England, and Eleanora assured him that if she could effect a divorce from Louis, her ships and treasures should be at his command, for the subjugation of king Stephen.

The intimacy between Henry and Eleanora soon awakened the displeasure of the king of France, and the prince departed for Anjou. Queen Eleanora immediately made an application for a divorce, under the plea that king Louis was her fourth cousin. It does not appear that he opposed this separation, though it certainly originated from the queen. Notwithstanding the advice of Suger, Louis seems to have accorded heartily with the proposition, and the divorce was finally pronounced, by a council of the church, at Baugenci,<sup>2</sup> March 18, 1152; where the marriage was not dissolved on account of the queen's adultery, as is commonly asserted, but declared invalid because of consanguinity.

<sup>1</sup> Vie de Gaufred, Duc de Normand.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Harris Nicolas' Chronology of History.

Eleanora and Louis, with most of their relations, met at Baugenci, and were present when the divorce was pronounced.<sup>1</sup>

When the divorce was first agitated, Louis VII. tried the experiment of seizing several of the strongholds in Guienne, but found the power of the south was too strong for him. It is useless for modern historians either to blame or praise Louis VII. for his scrupulous honesty, in restoring to Eleanora her patrimonial dominions; he restored nothing that he was able to keep, excepting her person. Gifford, who never wrote a line without the guide of contemporary chronicles, has made it fully apparent that the queen of the south was a stronger potentate than the king of the north. If the lady of *Oc* and *No*, and the lord of *Oui* and *Non*, had tried for the mastery, by force of arms, the civilized, the warlike, and maritime Provençal would certainly have raised the banner of St. George and the golden leopards far above the oriflamme of France, and rejoiced at having such fair cause of quarrel with their suzerain, as the rescue of their princess. Moreover, Louis could not detain Eleanora, without defying the decree of the pope.

On her way southward to her own country,<sup>2</sup> Eleanora stayed some time at Blois. The count of this province was Thibaut, elder brother to king Stephen, one of the handsomest and bravest men of his time. Much captivated with the splendour of "the great Provence dower," Thibaut offered his hand to his fair guest. He met with a refusal, which by no means turned him from his purpose, as he resolved to detain the lady, a prisoner in his fortress, till she complied with his proposal. Eleanora suspected his design, and departed by night, without the ceremony of leave-taking. She embarked on the Loire, and went down the stream to Tours, which was then belonging to the dominions of Anjou.

Here her good luck, or dexterous management, brought her off clear from another mal-adventure. Young Geoffrey Plantagenet, the next brother to the man she intended to marry, had likewise a great inclination to be sovereign of the south. He placed himself in ambush, at a part of the Loire called the Port of Piles, with the intention of seizing the duchess and her train, and carrying her off, and marrying her. "But," says the chronicler, "Eleanora was pre-warned by her good angel, and she suddenly turned down a branch of the stream southwards, towards her own country."

Thither Henry Plantagenet, the elder brother of Geoffrey, repaired, to claim the hand which had been promised him months before the divorce.

The celerity with which the marriage of Eleanora followed her divorce, astonished all Europe; for she gave her hand to Henry Plantagenet, duke of Normandy and count of Anjou, only six weeks after the divorce was pronounced. Eleanora is supposed to have been in her thirty-second year, and the bridegroom in his twentieth—a disparity somewhat ominous, in regard to their future matrimonial felicity.

The duchess of Aquitaine and the duke of Normandy were married at Bourdeaux,<sup>3</sup> on May-day, with all the pomp that the luxurious taste

<sup>1</sup> Bouquet des Histoires.

<sup>2</sup> Script. Rer. Franc.

<sup>3</sup> See Gervase. Brompton.

of Eleanora, aided by Provençal wealth, could effect. If Henry and Eleanora could have been married a few months earlier, it would have been better for the reputation of the bride, since all chroniclers are very positive in fixing the birth of her eldest son, William,<sup>1</sup> on the 17th of August, 1152, little more than four months after their union, on the first of May. The birth of this boy accounts for the haste with which Eleanora was divorced. Had king Louis detained his unfaithful wife, a dispute might have arisen, respecting the succession to the crown of France.

This child was born in Normandy, whither Henry conveyed Eleanora directly after their marriage, leaving the garrisons of Aquitaine commanded by Norman officers faithful to his interest; a step which was the commencement of his unpopularity, in his wife's dominions.

Louis VII. was much displeased at the marriage of his divorced queen with Henry of Anjou. He viewed with uneasiness, the union of the fair provinces of the south with Anjou and Normandy; and, in order to invalidate it, he actually forbade Henry to marry without his permission, claiming that authority as his feudal lord. His measures, we think, ought to acquit king Louis of the charge of too much righteousness in his political dealings, for which he is blamed by the superficial Voltaire. However, the hostility of Louis, who entered into a league with king Stephen, roused young Henry from the pleasures in which he was spending the first year of his nuptials; and, breaking from his wedded Circe, he obtained, from her fondness, a fleet, for the enforcement of his claims to his rightful inheritance. Eleanora was sovereign of a wealthy maritime country, whose ships were equally used for war and commerce. Leaving his wife and son in Normandy, Henry embarked from Harfleur with thirty-six ships, May, 1153. Without the aid of this Provençal fleet, England would never have reckoned the name of Plantagenet among her royal dynasties.

These circumstances are alluded to, with some dry humour, in the following lines, by Robert of Gloucester:

"In eleven hundred years of grace and forty-one,  
Died Geoffrey of Plantagenet, the earl of Anjou.  
Henry his son and heir, earl was made thorough  
All Anjou, and duke of Normand—much it was his mind  
To come and win England, for he was next of kind (kin),  
And to help his moder, who was oft in feeble chance.  
But he was much acquaint with the queen of France,  
*Some deal too much, as me weened*; so that in some thing  
The queen loved him, as me trowed, more than her lord the king;  
So that it was forth put that the king and she  
So sibbe were, that they must no longer together be.  
The kindred was proved so near, that king Louis there  
And Eleanor his queen by the pope departed were.

<sup>1</sup> Toone's Chronological History gives this date: it is supported by Sandford and Speed from chronicles, and the assertion of Robert of Gloucester in the following words:—Henry was acquaint with the queen of France *some deal too much, as me weened*."



Some were glad enow, as might be truly seen,  
 For Henry the empress' son forthwith espoused the queen.  
 The queen riches enow had under her hand,  
 Which helped Henry then to war on England.  
 In the eleventh hundred year and fifty-two  
 After God on earth came, this spousing was ado;  
 The next year after that, Henry his power nom (took),  
 And with six-and-thirty ships to England com."

There is reason to believe that, at this period, Henry seduced the heart, and won the affections, of the beautiful Rosamond Clifford, under the promise of marriage, as the birth of her eldest son corresponds with Henry's visit to England at this time; for he left England the year before Stephen's death, 1153.<sup>1</sup> Henry was busy, laying siege to the castle of one of his rebels in Normandy, when the news of Stephen's death reached him. Six weeks elapsed before he sailed to take possession of his kingdom. His queen and infant son accompanied him. They waited a month at Barfleur, for a favourable wind,<sup>2</sup> and after all they had a dangerous passage, but landed safely at Osterham, Dec. 8. The king and queen waited at the port for some days, while the fleet, dispersed by the wind, collected. They then went to Winchester,<sup>3</sup> where they received the homage of the southern barons.

Theobald archbishop of Canterbury, and some of the chief nobles, came to hasten their appearance in London, "where Henry was," say the Saxon chroniclers, "received with great honour and worship, and blessed to king the Sunday before Midwinter-day."

Eleanor and Henry were crowned in Westminster Abbey, December 19, 1154, "after England," to use the words of Henry of Huntingdon, "had been without a king for six weeks." Henry's security, during this interval, was owing to the powerful fleet of his queen, which commanded the seas between Normandy and England, and kept all rebels in awe.

The coronation of the king of England, and the luxurious lady of the south, was without parallel for magnificence. Here were seen in profusion mantles of silk and brocade, of a new fashion and splendid texture, brought by queen Eleanora<sup>4</sup> from Constantinople. In the illuminated portraits of this queen, she wears a wimple, or close coif, with a circlet of gems put over it; her kirtle, or close gown, has tight sleeves, and fastens with full gathers, just below the throat, confined with a rich collar of gems. Over this is worn the elegant pelisson, or outer robe, bordered with fur; with very full loose sleeves, lined with ermine, showing gracefully the tight kirtle sleeves beneath. The elegant taste of Eleanora, or, perhaps, her visit to the Greek capital, revived the beautiful costume of the wife of the Conqueror. In some portraits, the queen is seen with her hair braided, and closely wound round the head with jewelled bands. Over all was thrown a square of fine lawn or

<sup>1</sup> His proceedings in England have been detailed in the preceding biography.

<sup>2</sup> Brompton.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Harris Nicolas' Chronology of History.

<sup>4</sup> It is said she introduced the growth of silk in her southern dominions, a benefit attributed to Henry the Great; but in the murderous civil wars of France this art might have been lost.

gauze, which supplied the place of a veil, and was worn precisely like the *faziola*, still the national costume of the lower orders of Venice. Sometimes this coverchief, or kerchief was drawn over the features, down below the chin; it thus supplied the place of veil and bonnet, when abroad; sometimes it descended but to the brow; just as the wearer was disposed to show or conceal her face. Frequently the coverchief was confined, by the bandeau, or circlet, being placed on the head, over it. Girls before marriage wore their hair in ringlets or tresses on their shoulders. The church was very earnest in preaching against the public display of ladies' hair after marriage.

The long hair of the men likewise drew down the constant fulminations of the church; but after Henry I. had cut off his curls, and forbidden long hair at court, his courtiers adopted periwigs; indeed, if we may judge by the queer effigy on his coins, the handsome Stephen himself wore a wig. Be this as it may, the thunder of the pulpit was instantly levelled at wigs, which were forbidden by a sumptuary law of king Henry.

Henry II. made his appearance, at his coronation, with short hair, mustachios, and shaven chin; he wore a doublet, and short Angevin cloak, which immediately gained for him from his subjects, Norman and English, the sobriquet of Court-mantle. His dalmatica was of the richest brocade, bordered with gold embroidery. At this coronation, ecclesiastics were first seen in England dressed in sumptuous robes of silk and velvet, worked with gold. This was in imitation of the luxury of the Greek church: the splendour of the dresses seen by the queen at Constantinople, occasioned the introduction of this corruption in the western church.

Such was the costume of the court of Eleanora of Aquitaine, queen of England, in the year of her coronation, 1154.

The Christmas festivities were celebrated that year with great pomp, at Westminster Palace; but directly the coronation was over, the king conducted his queen to the palace of Bermondsey, where, after remaining some weeks in retirement, she gave birth to her second son, the last day of February, 1155.

Bermondsey, the first place of Eleanora's residence in England, was, as delineated in its ancient plans, a pastoral village, nearly opposite to London, of a character decidedly Flemish. Rich in well-cultivated gardens, and wealthy velvet meads, it possessed, likewise, an ancient Saxon palace, and a priory then newly built.

Assuredly the metropolis must have presented itself to the view of its foreign queen, from the palace of Bermondsey, with much more picturesque grandeur than it does at present, when its unwieldy size and smoky atmosphere prevent an entire *coup d'œil*. But at one glance from the opposite bank of the river, the eyes of the fair Provençal could then behold London, her royal city, situated on rising ground from the Thames. It was at that time girdled with an embattled wall, which was studded with gateways, both by water<sup>1</sup> and land. The new Tower of London kept guard on the eastern extremity of the city, and the lofty

<sup>1</sup> Dowgate and Billingsgate.

spire of the ancient cathedral presided over the western side, just behind the antique gateway of Ludgate. This gate led to the pleasant road of the river's Strand, ornamented with the Old Temple, its fair gardens and wharf, and interspersed with a few *inns*,<sup>1</sup> or metropolitan dwellings of the nobility, the cultivated grounds of which sloped down to their water-stairs and boat-houses, the Thames being then the highway of London.

The Strand road terminated in the majestic palace and abbey of Westminster; the Old Palace, with its yard and gardens, once belonging to St. Edward; and the New Palace, its noble hall and water-stairs, which owed their origin to the Norman dynasty.

Such was the metropolis when Henry II. succeeded to the English crown.

If the example and conduct of the first Provençal queen was neither edifying nor pleasing to her subjects, yet, in a commercial point of view, the connexion of the merchants of England with her Aquitanian dominions was highly advantageous. The wine trade with Bourdeaux became considerable.<sup>2</sup> In a few months after the accession of Eleanora, as queen-consort of England, large fortunes were made by the London traders, who imported the wines of Gascony from the port of Bourdeaux;<sup>3</sup> and above all (by the example of the maritime cities of Guienne) the shipping of England was governed by the ancient code of laws, called the code of Oleron.

In compliment to his consort Eleanora, Henry II. adopted for his plate-mark the cross of Aquitaine, with the addition of his initial letter **H**. An instance of this curious fact is still to be seen, in the grace-cup of Thomas à Becket.<sup>4</sup>

The English chose to regard Henry II. solely as the descendant of their ancient Saxon line. "Thou art son,"<sup>5</sup> said they, "to the most glorious empress Matilda, whose mother was Matilda Atheling, daughter to Margaret, saint and queen, whose father was Edward, son to king Edmund Ironside, who was great-grandson to king Alfred."

Such were the expressions of the English, when Henry convened a great meeting of the nobility and chief people, at Wallingford, in March 1155; where, by the advice of his mother, the empress Matilda, (who

<sup>1</sup> Inn was not, in early times, a word used for a house of public entertainment. Its original signification was a temporary abode in London, used by abbot, bishop, or peer.

<sup>2</sup> Anderson's History of Commerce.

<sup>3</sup> "The land," says one of the malcontent Saxon chroniclers, "became full of drink and drunkards." Claret was 4d. per gallon at this time. Gascon wine is general sold at 20s. per tun.

<sup>4</sup> This cup formerly belonged to the Arundel Collection, and was given by Bernard Edward, the late duke of Norfolk, to H. Howard, Esq., of Corby Castle, who thus became the possessor of this highly-prized relic of Eleanora's era. The cross of Aquitaine somewhat resembles the Maltese cross; the cup is of ivory mounted with silver, which is studded on the summit and base with pearls and precious stones. The inscription round the cup is, *Vinum tuum bibe cum gaudia*,—"Drink thy wine with joy;" but round the lid, deeply engraved, is the restraining injunction, *Sobrii estote*, with the initials T. B. interlaced with a mitre, the peculiarly low form of which stamps the antiquity of the whole.

<sup>5</sup> Ailred Chronicle.

had learned wisdom from adversity,) he swore to confirm to the English the laws of Alfred and Edward the Confessor, as set forth in the great charter of Henry I. At this grand convocation queen Eleanora appeared, with her eldest son, then in his fourth year, and the infant Henry. The baronage of England kissed the hands of the infants, and vowed to recognise them as the heirs of the English monarchy. A few weeks after this recognition, the queen lost her eldest son, who was buried at Reading, at the feet of his great-grandfather, Henry I.

The principal residences of the court were Winchester Palace, Westminster Palace, and the country palace of Woodstock. The amusements most favoured by queen Eleanora were of a dramatic kind. Besides the Mysteries and Miracles played by the parish clerks and students of divinity, the classic taste of the accomplished Eleanora patronized representations nearly allied to the regular drama; since we find that Peter of Blois,<sup>1</sup> in his epistles, congratulates his brother William on his tragedy of *Flaura and Marcus*, played before the queen. This William was an abbot, but was master of the revels or amusements at court; he composed all the Mysteries and Miracles performed before the queen, at Westminster and Winchester.

It is to Peter of Blois we owe a graphic description of king Henry's person and manners; likewise the picture of his court setting out in progress.

"When king Henry sets out of a morning, you see multitudes of people running up and down as if they were distracted, horses rushing against horses, carriages overturning carriages, players, gamesters, cooks, confectioners, morrice-dancers, barbers, courtesans, and parasites, making so much noise, and, in a word, such an intolerable tumultuous jumble of horse and foot, that you imagine the great abyss hath opened, and that hell hath poured forth all its inhabitants."

We think this disorderly crew must have belonged to the queen's court, for the sketch given us by the same most amusing author, of king Henry himself, would lead us to suppose that he countenanced no such riotous doings. The chaplain Peter<sup>2</sup> thus minutely describes king Henry, the husband of Eleanora of Aquitaine, in his letter to the archbishop of Panormitan.

"In praising David the king, it is read that he was ruddy, but you must understand that my lord the king is sub-rufus, or pale-red; his harness (armour) hath somewhat changed his colour. Of middle stature he is, so that among little men seemeth he not much, nor among long men seemeth he over little. His head is round, as in token of great wit, and of special high counsel the treasury."

<sup>1</sup> Or Petrus Blesensis, who was born 1120, at the city of Blois, of a noble family. This person was the very first who ever used the word *transubstantiation*. He was preceptor to William II. of Sicily, 1157; was invited to England by Henry II., and made his chaplain, and archdeacon of Bath, likewise private secretary to the king. He spent some years at the court of England, and died about the end of the twelfth century. He wrote about one hundred and thirty letters, in the most lively and individualizing style. These he collected and perpetuated, by making many copies, at the express desire of his royal master, Henry II.

<sup>2</sup> As edited by Hearne.

Our readers would scarcely expect phrenological observations in an epistle of the twelfth century, but we faithfully write what we find therein.

"His head is of such quantity, that to the neck, and to all the body, it accordeth by even proportion. His een pykeled (fine), and clear as to colour, while he is of pleased will, but through disturbance of heart, like sparkling fire or lightning with hastiness. His head of curly hair, when clipped square in the forehead, sheweth a lyonous visage, the nostrils even and comely, according to all the other features. High vaulted feet, legs able to riding, broad bust, and long champion arms, which telleth him to be strong, light, and hardy. In a toe of his foot the nail groweth into the flesh, and in harm to the foot over waxeth. His hands through their greatness sheweth negligence, for he utterly leaveth the keeping of them; never, but when he beareth hawks, weareth he gloves. Each day at mass and council, and other open needs of the realm, throughout the whole morning he standeth a foot, and yet when he eateth he never sitteth down. In one day he will, if need be, ride two or three journeys, and thus hath he oft circumvented the plots of his enemies. A huge lover of woods is he, so that when he ceaseth of war he haunteth places of hawking and hunting. He useth boots without folding caps, and homely and short clothes weareth he. His flesh would have charged him with fatness, but with travel and fasting he adaunteth, (keeps it down,) and in riding and going travaileth he mightily his youth. Not as other kings lieth he in his palace, but travelling about by his provinces espieth he the doings of all men. He doometh those that he judges when they do wrong, and punisheth them by stronger judgment than other men. No man more wise in counsel, ne more dreadful in prosperity, ne stedfaster in adversity. When once he loveth, scarcely will he ever hate; when once he hateth, scarcely ever receiveth he into grace. Oft holdeth he in hand swords, bows, and hunting gear, excepting he be at council or at book. When he may rest from worldly business, privily he occupieth himself about learning and reading, and among his clerks asketh he questions. For though your king<sup>1</sup> be well y-lettered, (learned,) our king by far is more y-lettered. I, forsooth, in science of letters, know the cunning of them both, ye wotting well that my lord the king of Sicily a whole year was my disciple, and though by you he had the beginning of teaching, yet by me he had the benefit of more full science.<sup>2</sup> And as soon as I went out of Sicily, *your* king cast away his books, and gave himself up to palatine<sup>3</sup> idleness. But, forsooth, *our* lord the king of England has each day a school for right well lettered men; hence his conversation, that he hath with them, is busy discussing of question. None is more honest than our king in speaking; ne in alms largess. Therefore, as holy writ saith, we may say of him, 'his name is a precious ointment, and the alms of him al the church shall take.'"

<sup>1</sup> The king of Sicily, William the Good, afterwards Henry the Second's son-in-law.

<sup>2</sup> By this passage it appears that Peter Blois had been the tutor to Henry II. and the king of Sicily.

<sup>3</sup> The idleness and luxuries of the palace.

Such is the picture of the first of our great Plantagenet monarchs, drawn in minute pencilling, by the man who had known him from his childhood.

It is not a very easy task to reduce to anything like perspicuity the various traditions which float through the chronicles, regarding queen Eleanora's unfortunate rival, the celebrated Rosamond Clifford. No one who studies history ought to despise tradition, for we shall find that tradition is generally founded on fact, even when defective, or regardless of chronology. The learned and accurate Carte has not thought it beneath him, to examine carefully the testimony that exists regarding Rosamond; and we find, from him, that we must confine her connexion with Henry to the two years succeeding his marriage. He has proved that the birth of her youngest son, and her profession as a nun at Godstow, took place within that space of time, and he has proved it from the irrefragable witness of existing charters, of endowments of lands given by the Clifford family to benefit the convent of Godstow, of provision made by Henry II. for her son William Long Espee and his brother, and of benefactions he bestowed on the nunnery of Godstow, because Rosamond had become a votaress therein. It appears that the acquaintance between Rosamond and Henry commenced in early youth, about the time of his knighthood by his uncle the king of Scotland; that it was renewed at the time of his successful invasion of England, when he entered privately into marriage contract<sup>1</sup> with the unsuspecting girl; and before he left England, to return to his wife, his noble boy William, surnamed Long Espee, was born. His own words afterwards confirmed this report: "Thou art my legitimate son," said he to one of the sons of Rosamond, who met him at the head of an armed force, at a time when the rebellion of the princes had distressed him; "and," continued he, "the rest are bastards."<sup>2</sup> Perhaps these words afford the truest explanation of the mysterious dissensions which perpetually distracted the royal family.

How king Henry excused his perjury, both to Rosamond and the queen, is not explained by chronicle; he seems to have endeavoured, by futile expedients, to keep them both in ignorance of his perfidy.

As Rosamond was retained by him as a prisoner, though not an unwilling one, it was easy to conceal from her the facts, that he had wedded a queen, and brought her to England; but his chief difficulty was to conceal Rosamond's existence from Eleanora, and yet to indulge himself with frequent visits to the real object of his love.

Brompton says, "That one day queen Eleanora saw the king walking in the pleasance of Woodstock, with the end of a ball of floss silk attached to his spur; coming near him unperceived, she took up the ball, and the king walking on, the silk unwound, and thus the queen traced him to a thicket in the labyrinth or maze of the park, where he disappeared. She kept the matter secret, often revolving in her own mind in what company he could meet with balls of silk. Soon after, the king left Woodstock for a distant journey; then queen Eleanora,

<sup>1</sup> Carte. Brompton. Boswell's Antiquities.

<sup>2</sup> Lingard.

bearing this discovery in mind, searched the thicket in the park, and discovered a low door cunningly concealed; this door she had forced, and found it was the entrance to a winding subterranean path, which led out at a distance to a sylvan lodge in the most retired part of the adjacent forest." Here the queen found, in a bower, a young lady of incomparable beauty, busily engaged in embroidery.

Queen Eleanor then easily guessed how balls of silk attached themselves to king Henry's spurs. Whatever was the result of the interview between Eleanor and Rosamond, it is certain that the queen did not destroy her rival either by sword or poison, though in her rage it is possible that she might threaten both. That Rosamond was not killed, may be ascertained by the charters before named, which plainly show that she lived twenty years, in great penitence, after her retirement from the king. It is extremely probable that her interview with Eleanor led to her first knowledge that Henry was a married man, and consequently to her profession at Godstow, which took place the second year of Henry's reign. The grand error in the statements regarding Rosamond is the assertion, that she was a young girl seduced and concealed by the king, when he was in advanced life. Now the charters collated by Carte, prove that the acquaintance of Rosamond and Henry commenced in early youth; that they were nearly of the same age, and that their connexion terminated soon after queen Eleanor came to England.

Twenty years afterwards, when Rosamond's death really occurred in her convent, it happened to coincide with Eleanor's imprisonment and disgrace. This coincidence revived the memory of the romantic incidents connected with Henry's love for Rosamond Clifford. The high rank of the real object of the queen's jealousy, at that time, and the circumstances of horror regarding Henry's profligacy, as the seducer of his son's wife, occasioned a mystery at court which no one dared to define. The common people, in their endeavours to guess this state secret, combined the death of the poor penitent at Godstow with Eleanor's imprisonment, and thus the report was raised that Eleanor had killed Rosamond. To these causes we trace the disarrangement of the chronology in the story of Rosamond, which has cast doubts on the truth of her adventures. In Brompton's narrative we find the labyrinth<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As to the labyrinth or maze at Woodstock, it most likely existed before the time of Rosamond, and remained after her death, since all pleasantries or gardens in the middle age were contrived with this adjunct. Traces of them exist to this day, in the names of places near defunct royal palaces; witness Maze-hill at Greenwich, (near the site of the maze or labyrinth of Greenwich Palace,) and the Maze in Southwark, once part of the garden of the princess Mary Tudor's palace. We have evidence that Edward III. (between whom and the death of Rosamond little more than a century intervened) familiarly called a structure pertaining to Woodstock Palace, Rosamond's Chamber, the locality of which he minutely describes in a letter preserved in the *Fœdera*, vol. iv. p. 629. In this document he directs William de Montacute to order various repairs at his manor of Woodstock, and that the house *beyond the gate in the new wall* be built again, and that same chamber, called Rosamond's Chamber, to be restored as before, and crystal plates, and marble, and lead to be provided for it. Here is indisputable proof that there was a structure called Rosamond's Chamber,

at Woodstock, and the clue of silk, famous in the romance and ballad. His chronology of the incidents is decidedly wrong, but the actual events are confirmed by the most ancient authorities.

Queen Eleanora brought her husband a princess in the year 1156; this was the eldest daughter, the princess Matilda.

The next year the queen spent in England. Her celebrated son, Richard Cœur de Lion, was born September 1157, at a palace considered one of the finest in the kingdom, called the Beau Monte, in Oxford. Thus, that renowned University claims the honour of being the birth-place of this great warrior. This palace was afterwards turned into the White Friar's church, and then to a workhouse. The chamber in which Richard was born still remains, a roofless ruin, with some vestiges of a fireplace;<sup>1</sup> but such as it is, this fragment is deeply interesting to the English, as the birth-place of a hero of whom they are proud.

Eleanora of Aquitaine, in some passages of her life, appears as one of the most prominent characters of her age: she was very actively employed, either as sovereign of her own dominions, or regent of Normandy, during the period from 1157 to 1172.

Eleanora was crowned a second time at Worcester, with the king, in 1159. When the royal pair came to the oblation, they both took off their crowns, and, laying them on the altar, vowed never to wear them more.

A son was born to Henry and Eleanora, September 23d, after the Worcester coronation: this prince bore the name of the king's father, Geoffrey Plantagenet.

The same year the king betrothed this boy to Constance, the heiress of Conan, duke of Bretagne. The infant Constance was about eighteen months older than the little prince Geoffrey. Henry had made most unjust seizure of Bretagne, by way of conquest; he, however, soothed the independent Bretons, by marrying their infant duchess to his son. His ambitious thirst for extension of empire was not sated by the acquisition of this dukedom; he immediately laid siege to Thoulouse, and, in the name of queen Eleanora, claimed that sovereignty of earl Raymond, who was in possession, and the ally of the king of France. A year was occupied with skirmishing and negotiation, during which time Eleanora acted as queen-regent in England.

Henry sent for his queen to Normandy, in 1160; she went in great state, taking with her prince Henry and her eldest daughter, to meet their father. The occasion of her presence being required, was the marriage of Marguerite, the daughter of her former husband Louis VII. by his second wife, with her young son Henry. Chancellor Becket went, with a magnificent retinue, to Paris, and brought the little bride, aged three years, to the queen at Rouen. Both bride and bridegroom were

distinct from Woodstock Palace, yet belonging to its domain, being a building situated beyond the park wall. Edward III. passed the first years of his marriage principally at Woodstock, therefore he well knew the localities of the place; which will agree with the old chroniclers, if we suppose Rosamond's residence was approached by a tunnel under the park wall.

<sup>1</sup> Boswell's Antiquities.



given, after their marriage, to Becket<sup>1</sup> for education; and this extraordinary person inspired, in their young bosoms, an attachment to him, that ended but with their lives.

Queen Eleanora kept her Christmas at Mans, with the king, in great state and splendour, the year of this betrothment.

After a sharp dispute, between Henry II. and Louis VII., relative to the portion of the princess Marguerite, the king of France compromised the matter, by giving the city of Gisors, as a portion, with another infant princess of France, named Alice, in 1162.<sup>2</sup> This child was in her third year when wedded to prince Richard, who was then seven years old. The little princess was unfortunately consigned to the king of England for education. Two marriages were thus contracted between the daughters of Louis VII., and the sons of his divorced queen; connexions which must seem most extraordinary, when we consider that the father of the brides, and the mother of the bridegrooms, had been married, and were the parents of children, who were sisters to both.

Louis VII. gave his eldest daughter, by queen Eleanora, in marriage to Henry the Large, count of Champagne. It was in this year that king Henry's troubles began with Thomas à Becket, who had, hitherto, been his favourite, his friend, and prime minister.

The contest between the king and Becket, which fills so many folio pages of modern history, must be briefly glanced at here. It was the same quarrel which had agitated England, between Henry I. and Anselm. But England no longer possessed a virtuous daughter of her royal race for a queen, who, keenly feeling the cry of the poor deprived of their lawful provision, mediated between these haughty spirits. The gay, luxurious daughter of the South was occupied with her own pleasures, and heeded not the miseries which the king's sequestrations of benefices brought on the destitute part of the population. Becket appealed to the empress Matilda, the king's mother, who haughtily repulsed his suit. Becket was the son of a London citizen, who had followed Edgar Atheling, on his crusading expedition, and was made prisoner in Syria; he obtained his liberty through the affection of a Syrian lady, an emir's daughter, who followed her lover after his departure, and succeeded in finding him in London, although she knew but two European words, "London" and "Gilbert," the place of abode, and Christian name, of her lover. The pagan maiden was baptized, by the favourite Norman name of Matilda, and from this romantic union sprang Thomas à Becket, who was remarkable for his learning and brilliant talents, and his fine stature and beauty. The love which Gilbert Becket bore to the race and blood of Alfred, which had sent him crusading with prince Edgar, rendered him the firm partisan of his niece, the empress Matilda.

Young Becket had taken the only road to distinction open to an Anglo-

<sup>1</sup> The secular education and support of the little princess, was consigned to Robert de Newburgh, one of Henry the Second's barons, who engaged to guard her person, and bring up the princess Marguerite in a manner befitting her royal birth.

<sup>2</sup> Louis had two daughters of that name,—one by Eleanora, and this child by his second queen, Alice of Champagne.

Saxon; yet he was *of* the church, but not in it; for he was neither priest, nor monk, being rather a church-lawyer than a clergyman. Henry II had distinguished this Anglo-Saxon with peculiar favour, to the indignation of his wife and mother, who warned him against feeling friendship for an Anglo-Saxon serf, with the loathing that the daughters of rajahs might feel for a pariah.

The see of Canterbury having remained vacant a year and a half, Henry urged his favourite to accept it, in hopes that he would connive at his plans, of diverting the revenues of the church, to enrich those of the crown; for this was simply the whole cause of the perpetual contest, between the Anglo-Norman kings, and the archbishops of Canterbury, since the conquest; but as the church supported the destitute poor, it is not difficult to decide which had the moral right. Archdeacon Becket protested that, if he were once a bishop, he must uphold the rights of the church; but the king still insisted on investing him with the archbishopric. The night before his consecration, at supper, he told the king that this archbishopric would place an eternal barrier between their friendship. Henry would not believe it. Becket was consecrated priest one day, and was invested as archbishop of Canterbury the next. To the annoyance of the king, he instantly resigned his chancellorship, and became a firm champion for the rights of his see.

For seven years, the contest between Becket and Henry continued, during which time we have several events to note; and to conclude the history of the empress Matilda.

She was left<sup>1</sup> regent of Normandy by her son, which country she governed with great wisdom, and kept in a peaceful state; but she never returned to England.

In the year 1165, king Louis VII. gave the princess Alice, his youngest daughter, by queen Eleanor, in marriage to the count of Blois, but, at the same time, endowed him with the office of high-seneschal of France, which was the feudal right to Henry II., as count of Anjou. Henry violently resented this disposal of his office; and the empress his mother, who foresaw the rising storm, and who had been thoroughly satiated with the horrors of war in her youth, wrote to pope Alexander, begging him to meet her, to mediate between the angry kings.

The pope obeyed the summons of the royal matron, and the kings met Matilda, and the pontiff at Gisors. The differences between Becket and Henry II. had then risen to a fearful height. It appears that Matilda was charged, by the pope, with a commission of peace-making, between Becket and his royal master. Emboldened by the mandate of the pope, Becket once more referred to the empress Matilda, as the mediator between the church and her son, and no more met with repulse.

We have seen the disgust, with which Matilda recoiled from any communication with Becket, as the son of a Saxon villein; nevertheless, this great man, by means of his eloquent epistles, was beginning to exercise the same dominion over the mind of the haughty empress, that he did over every living creature with whom he communicated. Henry II.,

<sup>1</sup> Hoveden. Gervase. Newbury.

alarmed at his progress, sent to his mother a priest named John of Oxford, who was charged to inform her of many particulars derogatory to Becket's moral character—events probably that happened during his gay and magnificent career, as chancellor and archdeacon.

The death of the duke of Bretagne had called Henry II. to take possession of that duchy, in the name of the infant duchess Constance, and her betrothed lord, his son Geoffrey, when the news arrived of the death of the empress Matilda, which occurred September 10, 1167. The mother of Henry II. was deeply regretted in Normandy, where she was called "the lady of the English." She governed Normandy with discretion and moderation, applying her revenues wholly to the benefit of the common weal, and many public works.<sup>1</sup> Her partiality for bridge-building is the only point of resemblance between her actions and those of her mother. While regent of Normandy, she applied her private revenues to building the magnificent stone bridge, of thirteen arches, over the Seine, called *Le Grand Pont*. The construction of this bridge was one of the wonders of the age, being built with curved piers, to humour the rapid current of the river. The empress built and endowed three monasteries; among these was the magnificent structure of St. Ouen. She resided chiefly at the palace of Rouen, with occasional visits to the abbey of Bec.

Matilda was interred, with royal honours, in the abbey of Bec, before the altar of the Virgin. Her son left his critical affairs in Bretagne to attend her funeral. He raised a stately marble tomb to her memory; upon it was the following epitaph, whose climax tends rather to advance the glory of the surviving son, than the defunct mother:—

"Great born, great married, greater brought to bed,  
Here Henry's daughter, wife, and mother's laid."<sup>2</sup>

Here her body remained till the year 1282, when the abbey church of Bec being rebuilt, the workmen discovered it, wrapped up in an ox-hide. The coffin was taken up, and, with great solemnity, re-interred in the middle of the chancel, before the high altar. The ancient tomb was removed to the same place, and, with the attention the church of Rome ever showed to the memory of a foundress, erected over the new grave. This structure falling to decay, in the seventeenth century, its place was supplied by a fine monument of brass, with a pompous inscription.

The character of this celebrated ancestress of our royal line was as much revered by the Normans, as disliked by the English. Besides Henry II., she was the mother of two sons, Geoffrey and William, who both preceded her to the grave.

Queen Eleanor was resident, during these events, at the palace of Woodstock, where prince John was born, in the year 1166.

Henry completed the noble hall of the palace of Rouen,<sup>3</sup> begun by

<sup>1</sup> Ducarel's Normandy.

<sup>2</sup> "*Ortu magna, viro major, sed maxima partu,  
Hic jacet Henrici filia, sponsa, parens.*"

<sup>3</sup> Thierry.

Henry I., and nearly finished by the empress Matilda. He sent for queen Eleanora, from England, to bring her daughter, the princess Matilda, that she might be married to her affianced lord, Henry the Lion, duke of Saxony. The nuptial feast was celebrated in the newly-finished hall of Rouen Palace, first opened for this stately banquet, 1167.

Queen Eleanora was left regent of Normandy by her royal lord; but the people, discontented at the loss of the empress Matilda, rebelled against her authority; which insurrection obliged Henry to come to the aid of his wife.

Guienne and Poitou became in a state of revolt soon after.<sup>1</sup> The people, who earnestly desired Eleanora, their native princess, to govern them, would not be pacified till Henry brought his queen, and left her at Bourdeaux, with her son Richard. Henry, the heir of England, was entitled the duke of Guienne; but for Eleanora's favourite son, Richard, was intended the county of Poitou, subject to vassalage to his brother and father. This arrangement quieted the discontents of Aquitaine. The princess Marguerite, the young wife of prince Henry, was left in Guienne, with her mother-in-law, while Henry II. and his heir proceeded to England, then convulsed with the disputes between church and state, carried on by Becket. Queen Eleanora and prince Richard remained at Bourdeaux, to the satisfaction of the people of the South, who were delighted with the presence of their reigning family, although the Norman deputies of king Henry still continued to exercise all the real power of the government.

The heart of Henry's son and heir still yearned to his old tutor, Becket—an affection which the king beheld with jealousy. In order to wean his son from this attachment, in which the young princess Marguerite fully shared, Henry II. resolved, in imitation of the Capetian royal family, to have his son crowned king at Westminster Abbey, and to associate him in the government.

"Be glad, my son,"<sup>2</sup> said Henry II. to his son, at this coronation, when he set the first dish on the table, at the coronation banquet; "there is no prince in Europe has such a sewer<sup>3</sup> at his table!"

"No great condescension for the son of an earl to wait on the son of a king," replied the young prince, aside to the earl of Leicester.

The princess Marguerite was not crowned at the same time with her husband;<sup>4</sup> she remained in Aquitaine, with her mother-in-law, queen Eleanora. Her father, the king of France, was enraged at this slight offered to his daughter, and flew to arms to avenge the affront. Yet it was no fault of king Henry, who had made every preparation for the coronation of the princess, even to ordering her royal robes to be in readiness. But when Marguerite found that Becket, the guardian of her youth, was not to crown her, she perversely refused to share the coronation of her husband.

<sup>1</sup> Tyrrell.

<sup>2</sup> Hoveden.

<sup>3</sup> This being one of the functions of the grand seneschal of France, which Henry had to perform, as his feudal service, at the coronation of a king of France as count of Anjou, led to his performing the same office at his son's banquet.

<sup>4</sup> Peter of Blois.

The character of Henry II., during the long strife that subsisted between him and his former friend, had changed from the calm heroism portrayed by Peter of Blois; he had given way to fits of violence, agonizing to himself, and dangerous to his health. It was said, that when any tidings came, of the contradiction of his will by Becket, he would tear his hair, and roll on the ground with rage, grasping handfuls of rushes, in the paroxysms of his passion.<sup>1</sup>

It was soon after one of these frenzies of rage, that, in 1170, he fell ill,<sup>2</sup> at Domfront, in Maine: he then made his will, believing his end approaching. To his son Henry, he left England, Normandy, Maine, and Anjou; to Richard he left the Aquitanian dominions; Geoffrey had Bretagne, in right of his wife, while John was left dependent on his brothers. From this order of affairs John obtained the nickname of Lackland, first given him by Henry himself, in jest, after his recovery.

During a fit of penitence, when he thought himself near death, Henry sought reconciliation with Becket; but when fresh contradictions arose, between the archbishop and the king, in one of those violent accessions of fury described above, Henry unfortunately demanded, in his rage, before the knights who attended in his bedchamber,<sup>3</sup> "Whether no man loved him enough to revenge the affronts he perpetually received from an insolent priest?"

On this hint, Fitz-Urse, Tracey, Britton, and Morville, slaughtered Becket, before the altar in his cathedral, the last day of the year 1171.

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## ELEANORA OF AQUITAINE,

### QUEEN OF HENRY II.

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#### CHAPTER II.

Eleanor in Aquitaine—Controlled by Normans—Conspires with her sons—Jealousy—Escapes, in man's attire—Means to visit her former husband—Seized—Carried prisoner to Bourdeaux—Queen Marguerite, her daughter-in-law—The two queens in captivity—Henry defeats his sons—Eleanor imprisoned in Winchester palace—Death of Rosamond—Turbulent sons of Henry, and Eleanor—Troubadour agitators—Death of the younger king—Temporary reconciliation of king and queen—Prince Richard's wrongs—Princess Alice—Reports of divorce—Eleanor again imprisoned—Songs concerning her—Her subjects' love—Death of prince Geoffrey—Grief of Eleanor—Eleanor brought to Poitou—Claims her dominions of prince Richard—King Henry's disquiets—Death—Burial—Queen in captivity—King Richard releases her—Appoints her queen regent—Her justice—Treasure-vault at Winchester—Queen mother's dower—Eleanor sets out for Navarre—Berengaria—Eleanor arrives at Messina, with Richard's bride—Departs—Mediates a dispute at Rome—Eleanor's regency—Her toilsome age.

<sup>1</sup> Hoveden.

<sup>2</sup> Brompton. Gervase. Hoveden.

<sup>3</sup> Fitz-Stephen calls the four who murdered the archbishop, the barons or servants of the king's bedchamber.

FROM the time of the marriage of her daughter Matilda to the Lion of Saxony, Eleanor had not visited England. The coronation of her eldest son, and the murder of Becket, had occurred while she resided in her native province. She had seen her son Richard, in 1170, crowned count of Poitou, with all the ceremonies pertaining to the inauguration of her ancestors. But king Henry only meant his sons to superintend the state and pageantry of a court; he did not intend that they should exercise independent authority; and Richard's will was curbed, by the faithful Norman veterans pertaining to his father. These castellans were the real governors of Guienne; an order of affairs equally disapproved of by prince Richard, queen Eleanor, and their Aquitanian subjects. The queen told her sons<sup>1</sup> Richard and Geoffrey, that Guienne and Poitou owed no obedience to a king of England, or to his Normans; if they owed homage to any one, it was to the sovereign of France; and Richard and Geoffrey resolved to act as their Provençal forefathers of old, and pay no homage to a king of England.

All these fermentations were approaching a violent crisis, when Henry II., in the summer of 1173, arrived, with his son, the young king, in Guienne, to receive the long-delayed homage of count Raymond of Thoulouse, and to inquire into the meaning of some revolts in the south, against his Norman castellans, evidently encouraged by his wife and prince Richard.

It was part of the duty of a feudal vassal to give his sovereign advice in time of need; and when Raymond of Thoulouse<sup>2</sup> came to this part of his oath of homage, as he knelt before Henry II., he interpolated it with these emphatic words:—

“Then I advise you, king, to beware of your wife and sons.”

That very night the young king, although he always slept in his father's bedroom, escaped to the protection of his father-in-law, Louis VII. From Paris he made all manner of undutiful demands on his father.

Simultaneously with the flight of young Henry, his brothers, Richard and Geoffrey, decamped for Paris. Richard's grievance was, that his wife, the princess Alice of France, was withheld from him; while Geoffrey insisted, as he had arrived at the mature age of sixteen, that the duchy of Bretagne, and his wife Constance, whose dower it was, should be given to his sole control.

Reports had been brought to Eleanor, that her husband meditated a divorce; for some lady had been installed, with almost regal honours, in her apartments at Woodstock. Court scandal pointed at her daughter-in-law, the princess Alice, whose youthful charms, it was said, had captivated her father-in-law, and for that reason the damsel was detained from her affianced lord, prince Richard. Enraged at these rumours, Eleanor resolved to seek the protection of the king of France; but as she was surrounded by Henry's Norman garrisons, she possessed so little power in her own domains as to be reduced to quit them in disguise. She assumed male attire, and had travelled part of her way in this dress, when Henry's Norman agents followed, and seized her, before

<sup>1</sup> Script. Rer. Franc.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Gervase.

she could reach the territories of her divorced husband. They brought her back very rudely, in the disguise she had adopted, and kept her prisoner in Bourdeaux, till the arrival of her husband. Her sons pursued their flight safely, to the court of the king of France.

Now commenced that long, dolorous, and mysterious imprisonment, which may be considered the third era in the life of Eleanora of Aquitaine. But the imprisonment of queen Eleanora was not stationary; we trace her carried, with her royal husband, in a state of restraint, to Barfleur, where he embarked for England. He had another prisoner, in company with Eleanora; this was his daughter-in-law, the young Marguerite, who had contumaciously defied him, left the royal robes, he had made for her coronation, unworn upon his hands, and scorned the crown he had offered to place on her brow, if not consecrated by Becket. With these royal captives, Henry II. landed at Southampton, some time in July, 1173.<sup>1</sup>

Henry II. proceeded directly to Canterbury, carrying the captive queens in his train. Here he performed the celebrated penance so often described, at the tomb of Becket. We have no new light to throw on this well-known occurrence, except the extreme satisfaction that his daughter-in-law Marguerite (who was in the city of Canterbury at the time) must have felt at the sufferings and humiliation of the man who had caused the death of her tutor and friend.

Scarcely had king Henry completed his penance, when tidings were brought him that his high constable had defeated prince Richard and the earl of Leicester, near Bury;<sup>2</sup> and this news was followed by a messenger announcing the capture of king William the Lion, at Alnwick, and that the royal prisoner was approaching, with his legs tied beneath his horse—the most approved method of showing contumely to a captive, in the middle ages. All this manifested very clearly, to the Anglo-Saxons, that St. Thomas had forgiven his royal friend, and was now exerting himself very actively in his behalf; but when, within a very few hours, intelligence came that the fleet of young king Henry, which had set sail to invade England, had been entirely demolished by a storm, public enthusiasm for the saint knew no bounds. The king went to return thanks to St. Thomas, at the shrine before which he had done penance, and the peace of the kingdom was wholly restored.

Then was queen Eleanora consigned to confinement, which lasted, with but short intervals, for sixteen years. Her prison was no worse place than her own royal palace at Winchester,<sup>3</sup> where she was well guarded by her husband's great justiciary and general, Ranulph de Glanville, who likewise had the charge of the royal treasury, at the same place. That Glanville treated her with respect, is evident from some subsequent events.

The poor penitent at Godstow expired in the midst of these troubles.—not cut off in her brilliant youth by queen Eleanora, but “from slow

<sup>1</sup> Diceto. Dr. Henry has likewise traced the progress of Henry with two queens, from the contemporary chroniclers.

<sup>2</sup> Brompton and Hoveden.

<sup>3</sup> Benedict Abbas, and many chronicles. Benedict was her prime minister, during her long regency, in the succeeding reign; therefore he must have known where his royal mistress resided, during so long a period of her life.

decay by pining." She was nearly forty, and was the mother of two sons, both of age. She died practising the severest penances, in the high odour of sanctity, and may be considered the Magdalen of the middle ages. Tradition says she declared on her death-bed, that when a certain tree<sup>1</sup> she named, in the convent garden, was turned to stone, they would know the time she was received into glory.<sup>2</sup> She died deeply venerated by the simple-hearted nuns of Godstow, who would have been infinitely scandalized had she received visits from Henry. Nor does one of the many church manifestoes, fulminated against Henry, charge him with such an aggravation of his offences as the seduction of a nun; an indubitable proof that the conventual vows had effectually estranged Henry and Rosamond.

As the princess Alice was still the betrothed of prince Richard, no one dared to hint at anything so deeply heinous as her seduction by her father-in-law; for the vengeance of the victorious Henry would have severely visited the promulgators of such scandal. The public, finding that the queen was imprisoned on account of her restless jealousy, compared the circumstance with the death of Rosamond, and revived the old story of Henry's passion for the penitent of Godstow. From this accidental coincidence, of Eleanora's imprisonment and Rosamond's death, the memory of the queen has been unjustly burdened with the murder of her former rival.

Henry II. seems to have indulged his eldest and his youngest son,

<sup>1</sup>The body of Rosamond was buried at Godstow, near Oxford, a little nunnery among the rich meadows of Evenlod. (Camden.) According to the peculiar custom of the times, the grave was not closed, but a sort of temporary tabernacle, called in chronicle a hearse, (of which the modern hatchment is a relic,) was erected over the coffin; this was raised before the high altar, covered with a pall of fair white silk, tapers burnt around it, and banners with emblazonment waved over it. Thus lying in state, it awaited the time for the erection of a monument. Twenty years after, the stern moralist, St. Hugh, bishop of Lincoln, in a course of visitation of convents, came to Godstow, and demanded, "Who laid there in such state under that rich hearse?" And when the simple nuns replied, "It was the corpse of their penitent sister, Rosamond Clifford," the reformer, perhaps remembering she was the mother of his superior, the archbishop, declared "that the hearse of a harlot was not a fit spectacle for a quire of virgins to contemplate, nor was the front of God's altar a proper station for it." He then gave orders for the expulsion of the coffin into the churchyard. The sisters of Godstow were forced to obey at the time; but after the death of St. Hugh, they gathered the bones of Rosamond into a perfumed bag of leather, which they enclosed in a leaden case, and, with all the pertinacity of woman's affection, deposited them in their original place of interment, pretending that the transformation of the tree had taken place, according to Rosamond's prophecy. Southey records a visit to the ruins of Godstow. The principal remnant serves for a cowhouse. A nut-tree grows out of the penitent's grave, which bears every year a profusion of nuts without kernels. King John thought proper to raise a tomb to the memory of Rosamond; it was embossed with fair brass, having an inscription about its edges, in Latin, to this effect:—

"This tomb doth here enclose  
The world's most beauteous rose—

Rose passing sweet erewhile,  
Now nought but odour vile."

<sup>2</sup>Boswell's Antiquities.



with the most ruinous fondness ; he always kept them near him, if possible, while prince Richard and prince Geoffrey, equally beloved by their mother, were chiefly resident with her, on the continent. Prince John had entirely an English education, having for his tutor that learned ecclesiastic, allied to the Welsh royal family, well known to historians, as the chronicler Giraldus Cambriensis. But small profit, either to his country or to himself, accrued from the English education of prince John.

Through the mediation of the king of France, his father-in-law, the young king Henry was reconciled to Henry II. for a time, and his young queen Marguerite was restored to him. King Louis himself visited England in 1178, for the purpose of praying for his son's health at the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket.

Notwithstanding the singular relationship in which the kings of England and France stood to each other, as the former and present husband of the same queen, they appear to have frequently met in friendly intercourse. Henry received Louis with much respect, and rode all night, August 18, with his train, to meet Louis VII. at Dover, where the chroniclers relate that Henry made many curious observations, on a total eclipse of the moon, which happened during his nocturnal journey,—a fact reminding us of his fondness for scientific questions, as recorded in his character by Peter of Blois.

Henry II. afterwards took his royal guest to his Winchester Palace, where he showed him his treasure-vault, and invited him to take anything he chose. Queen Eleanora was then at Winchester, but whether she met her divorced lord, is not recorded.

In the course of a few months Louis VII. died, of a cold caught at his vigils near the tomb of St. Thomas à Becket. Such was the end of the first husband of Eleanora of Aquitaine.

To enter into a minute detail of all the rebellions and insurrections undertaken by the insurgent sons of Eleanora, during their mother's imprisonment, were an endless, and indeed an impracticable task. It must suffice to hold up a picture of the manners and temper of the people over whom she was the hereditary sovereign, and who disdained the rule of any stranger, however nearly connected with the heiress of their country.

All the elements of strife were kept in a perpetual state of activity, by the combativeness of the troubadours, whose *tensons*, or war-songs, perpetually urged the sons of Eleanora to battle, when they were inclined to repose. Such, among many of inferior genius, was Bertrand de Born, viscount de Hauteforte, whom Dante has introduced with such terrific grandeur, in his *Inferno*, as the mischief-maker between Henry II. and prince John. But he began this work with Henry's eldest and best beloved son. Bertrand, and all the other troubadours, hated Henry II., whom they considered as an interloper, and a persecutor of their rightful princess, the duchess of Aquitaine, his wife. It is said that Bertrand was in love with queen Eleanora, for he addresses many covert declarations to a "royal Eleanora" in his *chansons*, adding exultingly

that "they were not unknown to her, for she can read!"<sup>1</sup> But there is a mistake of the mother for the daughter, since prince Richard, who was a brother troubadour, encouraged Bertrand in a passion for his beautiful sister Eleanora;<sup>2</sup> and to the daughter of the queen of England, not to herself, these passionate declarations were addressed.

In the midst of insurrection against his sire, the mainspring of which was the incessant struggle to obtain an independent sovereignty, young Henry Plantagenet died, at the castle of Martel in Guienne, in his twenty-eighth year. When he found his illness mortal, he was seized with deep remorse, for his frequent rebellions against his ever-indulgent father. He sent to king Henry, to implore his pardon for his transgressions. Before he expired, he had the satisfaction of receiving a ring from his sire, as a token of forgiveness. On the receipt of this pledge of affection, the penitence of the dying prince became passionate; when expiring, he caused himself to be taken out of bed, and died on sackcloth and ashes, as an atonement for his sins.

The death of their heir for a short time reconciled queen Eleanora and her royal husband. Henry mourned for the loss of this son, with the deep grief of David over Absalom. The contemporary chroniclers agree, that from the year 1183 to the year 1184, when the princess Matilda, with her husband Henry the Lion of Saxony, sought refuge in England, the captive queen was restored to her rank at the English court.<sup>3</sup>

Prince Richard, now become the heir of Henry and Eleanora, remained some time quiet, in order to see how his father would conduct himself towards him. Although he had arrived at the age of twenty-seven, and the princess to whom he was half-married was twenty-three, she was still detained from him. Richard had formed, at Guienne,<sup>4</sup> an attachment to a virtuous and beautiful princess, the daughter of a neighbouring potentate, and he was anxious that his mysterious entanglement with the princess Alice should be brought to a termination.

Richard seems to have met with nought but injury from his father; nor was his brother Geoffrey much better treated. The continual urgency of prince Richard, in regard to the princess Alice, was met with constant evasion. Reports were renewed, of the king's intention to divorce queen Eleanora; and the legate resident in England, cardinal Hugo, was consulted on the practicability of this divorce, and likewise on the possibility of obtaining a dispensation for the king's marriage with some person nearly allied to him.<sup>5</sup>

The consequence was, that prince Richard flew to arms, and got possession of his mother's inheritance, while queen Eleanora was again committed to some restraint in Winchester Palace.

<sup>1</sup> Count Thierry.

<sup>2</sup> The royal family considered the love of the noble troubadour as a mere poetical passion, and the young princess was married very passively to Alfonso king of Castille. It was no trifle in the eyes of Bertrand, and the cause, doubtless, of the fierce restlessness with which he disturbed the royal family during the life of Henry II.—Sismondi.

<sup>3</sup> Benedict Abbas.

<sup>4</sup> Hoveden and Dr. Henry.

<sup>5</sup> Gervase

The lengthened imprisonment of queen Eleanora infuriated her subjects in Aquitaine. The troubadours roused the national spirit in favour of their native princess, by such strains as these, which were the war-songs that animated the contest maintained by Richard in the name of his mother.

"Daughter of Aquitania,<sup>1</sup> fair fruitful vine, thou hast been torn from thy country, and led into a strange land. Thy harp is changed into the voice of mourning, and thy songs into sounds of lamentation. Brought up in delicacy and abundance, thou enjoyedst a royal liberty, living in the bosom of wealth, delighting thyself with the sports of thy women, with their songs, to the sound of the lute and tabor: and now thou mournest, thou weepest, thou consumest thyself with sorrow. Return, poor prisoner—return to thy cities, if thou canst; and if thou canst not, weep and say, 'Alas! how long is my exile!' Weep, weep, and say, 'My tears are my bread both day and night.'"

"Where are thy guards, thy royal escort?—where thy maiden train, thy counsellors of state? Some of them, dragged far from thy country, have suffered an ignominious death; others have been deprived of sight; others banished and wandering in divers places. Thou criest, but no one hears thee!—for the king of the north keeps thee shut up like a town that is besieged. Cry, then—cease not to cry! Raise thy voice like a trumpet, that thy sons may hear it; for the day is approaching when thy sons shall deliver thee, and then shalt thou see again thy native land!"

These expressions of tenderness for the daughter of the old national chiefs of Aquitaine, are followed by a cry of malediction against the towns which, either from force or necessity, still adhered to the king of the foreign race.

"Woe to the traitors which are in Aquitaine, for the day of their chastisement is at hand! La Rochelle dreads that day. She doubles her trenches, she girds herself all round with the sea, and the noise of her great works is heard beyond the mountains. Fly before Richard, duke of Aquitaine, ye who inhabit the coast! for he shall overthrow the glorious of the land—he shall annihilate, from the greatest to the least, all who deny him entrance into Saintonge!"

For nearly two years, the Angevin subjects of Henry II., and the Aquitanian subjects of his captive queen, gave battle to each other; and from Rochelle to Bayonne, the dominions of queen Eleanora were in a state of insurrection.

The contemporary chroniclers who beheld this contest of husband against wife, and sons against father, instead of looking upon it as the natural consequence of a divided rule in an extended empire, swayed by persons of great talents, who had received a corrupt education, considered it as the influence of an evil destiny presiding over the race of Plantagenet, and as the punishment of some great crime.

Many sinister stories, relating to the royal family, were current. Queen Eleanora, when pursuing, in her early days, her guilty career as queen

<sup>1</sup> Chronic. Ricardi Pictaviensis ap. Script. Rer. Franc.

of France,<sup>1</sup> it was whispered, had been too intimate with Geoffrey Plantagenet, her husband's father. Then the story of Fulk the Red,<sup>2</sup> the first that took the name of Plantagenet, was revived, and the murder of his brother discussed. Likewise, the wonderful tale was remembered of the witch-countess of Anjou, Henry II.'s great-grandmother, wife to Foulke le Rechin (or the Quarreller). This count, having observed that his wife seldom went to church, (and when she did, quitted it always at the elevation of the host,) thought proper not only to force her to mass, but made four of his esquires hold her forcibly by the mantle when she was there; when, lo! at the moment of consecration, the countess, untying the mantle by which she was held, left it in the hands of the esquires, and, flying through the window of the chapel, was never heard of more. A great thunder-storm happened at the moment of her departure; a dreadful smell of brimstone remained, which "no singing of the monks could allay."

The truth of this marvellous tale probably is, that the countess was killed by lightning, in a church injured by a thunder-storm.

Her ungracious descendant, Richard Cœur de Lion, used to tell this tale with great glee, to his knights at Poitou, and added, "Is it to be wondered, that having sprung from such a stock, we live on bad terms with each other? From Satan we sprang, and to Satan we must go."

Geoffrey held out Limoges, in his mother's name, with great pertinacity. Among other envoys came a Norman clerk, holding the cross in his hand, and supplicated Geoffrey not to imitate the crime of Absalom.

"What?" said Geoffrey, "wouldst thou have me deprive myself of mine inheritance? It is the fate of our family that none shall love the rest. Hatred is our rightful heritage," added he, bitterly, "and none will ever succeed in depriving us of it."

During a conference which prince Geoffrey soon after had with his father, in the market-place at Limoges, for the purpose of discussing peace, the Aquitanian soldiers and supporters of Geoffrey, full of rage at the sight of the monarch who kept their duchess imprisoned, broke the truce, by aiming from the castle a shower of cross-bow shafts at the person of the king, one of which came so close as to shoot his horse through the ear. The king presented the arrow to Geoffrey, saying, with tears, "Tell me, Geoffrey, what has thy unhappy father done to thee, to deserve that thou, his son, shouldst make him a mark for thine archers?"

Geoffrey was greatly shocked at this accident, of which he declared he was wholly innocent. It was the outbreak of popular fury in his mother's subjects.

When prince Richard and prince Geoffrey were not combating with their father's subjects, they employed themselves in making war on each other. Just before the death of Geoffrey, his brother Richard invaded his dominions in Bretagne, with fire and sword, on some unaccountable affront, blown into a blaze by the *sirventes* of the troubadours. After this faction was pacified, Geoffrey went to assist at a grand tournament

<sup>1</sup> Brompton.

<sup>2</sup> Script. Rer. Franc.

at Paris, where he was flung from his steed in the midst of the *melee*, and was trodden to death beneath the feet of the coursers. He was buried at Notre Dame.

This was the second son queen Eleanora had lost since her imprisonment, in the very flower of his youth and strength. Like his brother Henry, this prince was remarkable for his manly beauty, and the agile grace of his martial figure. His death afflicted his mother equally with that of her first-born; for Geoffrey had been brought up a Provençal, and had shown far more resentment for his mother's imprisonment than the young king Henry. That Eleanora loved both with all a mother's passionate tenderness, we have the evidence of her own most eloquent words. In one of her letters to the pope, preserved in the collection of Peter Blois, she says,—

“The younger king and the count of Bretagne both sleep in dust, while their most wretched mother is compelled to live on, though tortured by the irremediable recollections of the dead.”<sup>1</sup>

The dislike that queen Eleanora manifested for the widow of her son Geoffrey, is one of the circumstances that float like straws on the stream of common history, without any one defining from whence it came. A passage in the “Newbury Chronicle,” hitherto little noticed, casts some light on this aversion, which certainly did not commence, on the queen's part, till after the death of Geoffrey. From it we find that the misfortunes of prince Arthur began before his birth, and were strengthened by his baptism, on the 29th of March, 1187. The duchess Constance brought this heir of misfortune into the world a few months after the death of his father. Eleanora, the eldest child of Constance, had been proclaimed heiress of Bretagne, but was disinherited on the birth of her brother. “It was the pleasure of king Henry and queen Eleanora that the infant should be named Henry; but the Bretons chose to indulge their natural prejudices in favour of king Arthur, whom they claim as their countryman; and as they looked forward to the boy as the possible heir of England, they insisted on giving the last descendant of the Armorican princes that favourite name. This was the first public displeasure given by Constance to the parents of her husband; their enmity increased with years.”

“Great scandal arose after the death of Geoffrey, regarding the duchess Constance and her brother-in-law John: till his marriage with Isabella of Angoulême, he was constantly ‘haunting her;’ and on this account, it is supposed, Henry II., after the birth of her posthumous son Arthur, forced the duchess to marry the earl of Chester, as prince John's attentions to his sister-in-law caused considerable comment.”<sup>2</sup>

Prince Richard having got possession of the whole of Aquitaine, his father commanded him to surrender it to his mother, queen Eleanora, whom he had brought as far as Normandy, to claim her right.<sup>3</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Rex junior et comes Britannie in pulvere dormiunt, et eorum mater infelissima vivere cogitur, ut irremediabiliter de mortuorum memoriâ torqueatur.—Second Letter from Eleanora to Pope Celestine.—*Fœdera*, vol. i. p. 74.

<sup>2</sup> Carte.

<sup>3</sup> Benedict Abbas.

moment the prince received this mandate, he gave up the territory, and hastened to Normandy to welcome the queen, and congratulate her on her restoration to freedom.

This release is recorded by the friend of the queen, abbot Benedict. From him we learn, that, during the year 1186, Eleanora exercised sovereign power at Bourdeaux, and then resigned it to her son Richard, who, in the meantime, had made his peace with his father.

Henry II. was with his queen during this period; for Benedict declares that, the following April, they sailed from Barfleur to England. Eleanora was again put under some restraint at Winchester Palace, which she quitted no more till the death of King Henry, three years afterwards.

The commission of moral wrong had involved Henry, great and powerful as he was, in a net, within whose inextricable folds he either vainly struggled, or awaited the possibility of deliverance by the death of the queen. If Eleanora had preceded him to the grave, as in the common course of nature might have been expected, he would have sued instantly for a dispensation to marry the affianced bride of his son. While the queen lived, this could not be done without an explosion of scandal, which would have dishonoured him in the eyes of all Europe. Henry had only two alternatives; either to permit his heir to marry the princess Alice, or to shorten the life of the queen Eleanora by violent means. Although his principles were not sufficiently firm to resist indulgence in guilt, he was not depraved enough to commit deliberately either atrocity. So time wore uneasily on, till prince Richard attained the age of thirty-four, and Alice that of thirty; while the king still invented futile excuses, to keep his son in this miserable state of entanglement, wherein Richard could neither free himself from Alice, nor give his hand to any other bride. Yet Richard, to further his own ends, made the brother of Alice believe that he was willing to complete his engagement.

"It was the wish of Henry II. to crown his son John king of England during his lifetime, and to give Richard all his dominions that lay beyond the English sea. Richard was not content: he came to the king of France, and cried for aid, saying, 'Sire, for God's sake suffer me not to be disinherited thus by my sire. I am engaged to your sister Alice, who ought by right to be my wife. Help me to maintain my rights and hers.'"

The king of France, after vainly seeking for explanation of the reason why his sister was not married to her betrothed, made, with prince Richard, an appeal to arms. King Philip contrived to induce prince John to join in the rebellion. When Henry heard that this idolized child of his old age had followed the insurgent example of his brethren, he threw himself into a paroxysm of rage, and invoked the bitterest curses on his head, and that of prince Richard; he cursed the day of his own birth; and, after giving orders to his painter at Windsor, to paint a device, of a young eaglet pecking out the eyes of an eagle, as a reproach to prince John, he set out for the continent in an agonized state of mind.

After waging, for the first time in his life, an unsuccessful war, king

<sup>1</sup> Bernard le Tresorier. Guizot's Chron.

Henry agreed to meet his son Richard and the king of France at Verzalai.

As the king was on his progress to this congress, he fell ill at Chinon, after indulging in one of his fits of violent passion.<sup>1</sup> Finding that his life was departing, he caused himself to be carried before the high altar of the cathedral, where he expired in the supporting arms of Geoffrey the youngest son of Rosamond, who was the only one of his children from whom he received filial attention in his last moments. Before he died, he spoke earnestly to his son, and gave him a ring of great value then laying his head on the bosom of Geoffrey,<sup>2</sup> his spirit departed, leaving his features still convulsed with the agony of rage, which had hastened his end.

When the news was brought to Richard, that the crown of England had devolved upon him by the sudden death of his father, he was torn with remorse and regret. He went to meet the royal corpse at Fontevraud, the place of interment pointed out by the will of the deceased monarch.

King Henry, when he was carried forth to be buried, was first appeared in his princely robes, having his crown on his head, gloves on his hands, and shoes on his feet, wrought with gold; spurs on his heels, a ring of gold on his finger, a sceptre in his hand, his sword by his side, and his face uncovered. But this regalia was of a strange nature; for the corpse of Henry, like that of the Conqueror, had been stripped and plundered; and when those who were charged with the funeral demanded the ornaments in which Henry was to lie in state, the treasurer, as a favour, sent a ring of little value, and an old sceptre. As for the crown with which the warlike brow of Henry was encircled, it was but the gold fringe from a lady's petticoat, torn off for the occasion; and in this odd attire, the greatest monarch in the world went down to his last abode.<sup>3</sup>

Thus he was conveyed to the abbey of Fontevraud, where he lay with his face uncovered, showing, by the contraction of his features, the violent rage in which he departed. When Richard entered the abbey he shuddered, and prayed some moments before the altar, when the nose and mouth of his father began to bleed so profusely, that the monk in attendance kept incessantly wiping the blood from his face. Richard testified the most poignant remorse at this sight. He wept bitterly; and, prostrating himself, prayed earnestly, under the mingled stimulus of grief and superstition, and then, rising, he departed, and looked on the face of his sire no more.<sup>4</sup>

Henry died July 6th, 1189.

The first step taken by Richard I., on his accession to the English crown, was to order his mother's release from her constrained retirement at Winchester Palace. From a captive, queen Eleanor in one moment became a sovereign; for the reins of the English government were placed in her hands, at the time of her release. She made a noble use of her authority, according to a manuscript cited by Tyrrell.

<sup>1</sup> Which Brompton declares was the immediate cause of death.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Lyttleton.

<sup>3</sup> Roger Wendover.

<sup>4</sup> Count Thierry, from Norman Chronicles.

"Eleanora of Guienne, directly she was liberated from her restraint at Winchester, was invested with full powers as regent, which she most beneficially exercised, going in person from city to city, setting free all those confined under the Norman game-laws, which in the latter part of Henry's life were cruelly enforced. When she released prisoners, it was on condition that they prayed for the soul of her late husband. She likewise declared she took this measure for the benefit of his soul."

Her son had given her full power, but, to her great honour, she did not use it, against those who had been her gaolers or enemies. Her regency was entirely spent in acts of mercy and wisdom, and her discriminating acumen in the prisoners she liberated may be judged by the following list.

She liberated fully — "All confined for breach of forest laws, who were accused of no further crime. All who were outlawed for the same, she invited back to their homes and families. All who had been seized by the king's arbitrary commands, and were not accused by their hundred or county, she set free."

"But all malefactors accused on good and lawful evidence were to be kept in prison, without bail."

When we consider Eleanora going from city to city, examining thus into the wrongs of a government that had become arbitrary, and seeing justice done to the lowest, we are apt to think that her imprisonment had improved her disposition.

The queen-regent next ordained that "every freeman of the whole kingdom should swear that he would bear faith to his lord, Richard, son of king Henry and queen Eleanora, for the preservation of life, limbs, and terrene honour, as his liege lord, against all living; and that he would be obedient to his laws, and assist him in the preservation of peace and justice."<sup>1</sup>

Eleanora showed so little distaste to the Winchester Palace, that she returned thither after her justiciary progress, to await the arrival of her son from the coast of Normandy.

It appears that king Richard, when he gave commands for his mother's release, ordered her castellan, the keeper of the treasure-vault at Winchester, Ranulph de Glanville, to be thrown into a dungeon in Winchester Castle, and loaded with fetters weighing a thousand pounds.<sup>2</sup>

Our ancient chroniclers, when labouring to reconcile the prophecies of Merlin with the events of English history, while hunting after the impossible, very often start some particulars which would otherwise have slept shrouded in the dust of the grave. Thus, speaking of the liberation of Eleanora of Aquitaine by her son, Richard I., Matthew Paris says she is designated, by Merlin's sentence, *Aquila rupti faderis tertiâ nidificatione gaudebit*; "The destructive eagle shall rejoice in her third nestling." — "Eleanora," pursues Matthew, "is the eagle, for she

<sup>1</sup> This is the first oath of allegiance ever taken in England to an uncrowned king.

<sup>2</sup> Tyrrell, to whose most learned and indefatigable research the elucidation of many dark passages of Eleanora's life is owing.



spreads her wings over two nations, England and Aquitaine; also, by reason of her *excessive beauty*, she destroyed or injured nations. She was separated from the king of France by reason of consanguinity, and from the king of England by divorce *upon suspicion*, and kept in close confinement. She rejoiced in her third nestling, since Richard, her third son, honoured her with all reverence after releasing her from prison."

If Matthew would imply that Henry confined Eleanora for impropriety of conduct, he is not supported by other authors.

King Richard I. landed at Portsmouth, August the 12th, 1189. Three days after, he arrived at his mother's court at Winchester, where his first care was directed to his father's treasure. After he had conferred with his mother, he ordered before him Ranulph de Glanville, who gave him so good an account of the secrets of the Winchester treasure-vault, that he set him at liberty, and ever after treated him with confidence. Either Ranulph de Glanville had behaved to the queen, when his prisoner, with all possible respect, or Eleanora was of a very magnanimous disposition, and forbore prejudicing her son against her late castellan. Glanville gave up to the king the enormous sum of nine hundred thousand pounds, besides valuable jewels. At his first seizure, only 100,000 marks were found in the treasure-vault, which, it seems, possessed some intricacies only known to Glanville.<sup>1</sup>

The king's next care was to settle the revenue of the mother he so passionately loved, and whose wrongs he had so fiercely resented. Her dower was rendered equal to those of the queens Matilda Atheling and Matilda of Boulogne.

The king's coronation took place on the 3d of September, 1189. As the etiquette of the queen-mother's recent widowhood prevented her from sharing in this splendid festival, all women were forbidden to be present at its celebration. The chroniclers declare that Richard issued a proclamation the day before, debarring all women<sup>1</sup> and Jews from entering the precincts of Westminster Abbey, at the time of his inauguration:—a classification of persons greatly impugning the gallantry of the lion-hearted king, when we remember the odium attached to the name of a Jew.

The Provençal alliance had produced a prodigious influx of this usurious race into England. As they enjoyed high privileges in the here-

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<sup>1</sup>Hoveden. Brompton. Tyrrell. Paris. The singular employment of war-like barons as justiciaries, and the combination of the offices of general and of lawyer in one man, are strange features in the Norman and Angevin domination in England. This Ranulph de Glanville is an instance; he was Henry's great general, who defeated and took prisoner William the Lion of Scotland, but he is only known to our gentlemen of the bar as the author of "*Glanville's Institutes*;" this steel-clad baron being the first who reduced the laws of England to a written code. To make the contrast with modern times still stronger, the great legalist died crusading, having, either to please Cœur de Lion, or to atone for his sins, both as lawyer and general, taken up the cross, for the purpose of battling "*Mahoun and Termagaunt*."

<sup>1</sup>Hoveden. Brompton. M. Paris. The last says, all women of *bad character*

ditary dominions of queen Eleanora, they supposed they were secure under her son's government. Believing money would buy a place everywhere, they flocked to the abbey, bearing a rich present, but the populace set upon them and slaughtered them, being excited to a religious mania by the preaching of the crusade. The massacre of these unfortunate money-brokers was not perpetrated with the connivance of either king Richard or the queen-mother, since Brompton expressly declares that the ringleaders were, by the king's orders, tried and put to death.

Alice, the long-betrothed bride of Richard, was neither married nor crowned. On the contrary, she was committed to the same species of restraint, by the orders of the queen, in which she herself had been so long held captive. The princess Alice had been twenty-two years without leaving England; and as she was the only person on whom Eleanora retaliated any part of her wrongs, the inference must be drawn, that she considered Alice as the cause of them.

Eleanora departed for Aquitaine as soon as her son had settled her English dower, and Richard embarked at Dover, for Calais, to join the crusade, taking with him but ten ships from the English ports. His troops were disembarked, and he marched across France, to his mother's dominions, where he formally resigned to her the power he had exercised, during his father's lifetime, as her deputy. Richard appointed the rendezvous of the crusade at Messina, and, directing his mother to meet him there, he set sail from Marseilles, for Sicily; while Eleanora undertook a journey to Navarre, to claim for him the hand of Berengaria, the daughter of king Sancho.

Richard had much to effect at Messina, before he commenced the crusade. Before he struck a blow for Christendom, he was obliged to right the wrongs of his sister Joanna, queen of Sicily, the youngest daughter of Eleanora and Henry II. William the Good, through the recommendations of Peter of Blois, (who had formerly been his tutor,) asked the hand of Joanna Plantagenet of her father. The Sicilian ambassador granted Joanna an immense dower; but when the aged bridegroom found that his young queen was still more beautiful and sweet-tempered than her father's chaplain, Peter, had set forth, he greatly augmented her dower. The king of Sicily died childless, leaving his young widow great legacies in his will.

King Tancred robbed her of these, and of her dower: and, to prevent her complaints, enclosed her in prison at Messina. It was this outrage Richard hastened there to redress. But the list of goods the fair widow directed her brother to claim of Tancred, could surely have only existed in a catalogue of Aladdin's household furniture:—an arm chair of solid gold;<sup>1</sup> footstools of gold; a table of the same with tressels, twelve feet long; besides urns and vases of the same precious metal. These reasonable demands were enforced by the arm of the mighty Richard, who was as obstinate and wilful as Achilles himself.

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<sup>1</sup>Hoveden and Vinisauf; likewise Piers of Langtoft, who mentions many other curious articles.

Tancred deserves pity, when we consider the extraordinary nature of the legacy. However, he compounded for dower and legacy at last, with the enormous payment of 40,000 ounces of gold. This treasure, with the royal widow herself, were consigned to Richard forthwith. Thus was a companion provided for Richard's expected bride, the elegant and refined Berengaria, who, under the conduct of Eleanora of Aquitaine, was daily expected.

Richard was so well pleased with the restoration of his sister and her treasures, that he asked Tancred's daughter in marriage for his then acknowledged heir, Arthur of Bretagne.<sup>1</sup>

During this negotiation Eleanora arrived in Messina,<sup>2</sup> bringing with her the long-beloved Berengaria. Although it was long since Eleanora had seen her daughter Joanna, she tarried but four days in her company, and then sailed for Rome. There is reason to suppose that her errand was to settle a dispute which had arisen between king Richard and his half-brother Geoffrey, the son of Rosamond, whom the king had appointed archbishop of York, according to his father's dying request, but had required an enormous sum from the revenues of the archbishopric.<sup>3</sup> Queen Eleanora returned to England,<sup>4</sup> with her friend the archbishop of Rouen; he was soon after appointed its governor, in place of Longchamp, who had convulsed the country by his follies.

We have seen Eleanora taken from captivity by her son Richard, and invested with the high authority of queen-regent: there is no reason to suppose that that authority was revoked; for, in every emergency during the king's absence, she appears as the guiding power. For this purpose she absented herself from Aquitaine, whose government she placed in the hands of a deputy, her grandson Otho of Saxony;<sup>5</sup> and at the end of the reign of Cœur de Lion, we find her, according to the words of Matthew Paris, "governing England with great wisdom and popularity."

Queen Eleanora, when thus arduously engaged in watching over the interests of her best-beloved son, was approaching her seventieth year—an age when rest is imperiously demanded by the human frame. But years of toil still remained before her, ere death closed her weary pilgrimage in 1204; and these years were laden with sorrows, which drew from her that pathetic alteration of the regal style, preserved in her letter to the pope, on occasion of the captivity of Cœur de Lion, where she declares herself—

"Eleanora,<sup>6</sup> by the wrath of God, queen of England."

Not only in this instance, but in several others, traits of the subdued spirit of Eleanora are to be discovered; for the extreme mobility of her spirits diffused itself even over the cold records of state, when in bitter

<sup>1</sup> The documents pertaining to this contract prove that Arthur was then considered, by his uncle, as the heir of England.—*Fœdera*, vol. i.

<sup>2</sup> See the succeeding memoir.

<sup>3</sup> Rapin, vol. i. 248.

<sup>4</sup> Speed, 518.

<sup>5</sup> Tyrrell.

<sup>6</sup> Peter of Blois's *Epistles*.

grief she subscribes herself, "*in ira Dei Regina Anglorum*," and "*Ælië-nora misera et utinam miserabilis Anglorum Regina*." When swayed by calmer feelings, she styles herself "*Æliënora, by the grace of God, humbly queen of England*."<sup>1</sup>

Eleanor of Aquitaine is among the very few women who have atoned for an ill-spent youth, by a wise and benevolent old age. As a sovereign, she ranks among the greatest of female rulers.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rymer, vol. i.

<sup>2</sup> To prevent repetition, the rest of her life is comprehended in the memoirs of her daughters-in-law, Berengaria and Isabella.

AND OF VOL. I

LIVES

OF THE

QUEENS OF ENGLAND,

FROM

THE NORMAN CONQUEST;

WITH

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# BERENGARIA OF NAVARRE,

## QUEEN OF RICHARD I.

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Mutual attachment of Berengaria and Richard—Berengaria's descent—Berengaria demanded in marriage—Travels with queen Eleanora—Waits with her at Brindisi—Consigned to queen Joanna—Embarks for Palestine with her—Storm—Terror of Berengaria—Berengaria lands—Nuptials at Cyprus—Costume of queen Berengaria—Crowned queen of England and Cyprus—Berengaria sails for Palestine—Received by king Philip at Acre—Her residence there—Berengaria embarks with Joanna—Richard shipwrecked—Imprisoned—Berengaria at Rome—Queens escorted by count Raymond St. Gilles—Queen Joanna married to him—Misfortunes of king Richard—Eleanora's regency—Berengaria resigns the captive Cypriot—Berengaria's brother—Queen-mother returns with Richard to England—Berengaria forsaken—Richard's penitence—Berengaria's goodness—Follows Richard to war—Devoted love—King's death—Death of queen Joanna—Berengaria's dower—Her pecuniary troubles—Builds abbey of Espan—Resides there—Dies there—Buried—Effigy—Character.

BERENGARIA, the beautiful daughter of Sancho the Wise, king of Navarre, was first seen by Richard Cœur de Lion, when count of Poitou,<sup>1</sup> at a grand tournament given by her gallant brother at Pampeluna, her native city. Richard was then captivated by the beauty of Berengaria, but his engagement to the fair and frail Alice of France prevented him from offering her his hand.

Berengaria may be considered a Provençal princess, by language and education, though she was Spanish by descent. Her mighty sire, Sancho the Wise, had for his immediate ancestor Sancho the Great, called the emperor of all Spain. He inherited the little kingdom of Navarre, and married Beatrice, daughter to Alphonso, king of Castille, by whom he had three children, Berengaria, Blanche, and one son, Sancho, surnamed the Strong; a hero celebrated by the Provençal poets for his gallant exploits against the Moors; he defeated the Miramolin, and broke, with his battle-axe,<sup>2</sup> the chains that guarded the camp of the infidel, which chains were afterwards transferred to the armorial bearings of Navarre.

An ardent friendship had subsisted, from boyhood, between Richard and Sancho the Strong, the gallant brother of Berengaria. A similarity of pursuits strengthened the intimacy of Richard with the royal family of Navarre. The father and brother of Berengaria were celebrated for their skill and judgment in Provençal poetry.<sup>3</sup> Berengaria was herself a learned princess; and Richard, who was not only a troubadour-poet, but, as acting sovereign of Aquitaine, was the prince and judge of all

<sup>1</sup> See the Biography of Eleanora of Aquitaine, vol. i.

<sup>2</sup> Atlas Historique.

<sup>3</sup> Chronicle of Navarre



troubadours, became naturally drawn into close bonds of amity with a family, whose tastes and pursuits were similar to his own.

No one can marvel that the love of the ardent Richard should be strengthened, when he met the beautiful, the cultivated, and virtuous Berengaria, in the familiar intercourse which sprang from his friendship with her gallant brother;<sup>1</sup> but a long and secret engagement, replete with "hope deferred," was the fate of Richard the Lion-hearted and the fair flower of Navarre.

Our early historians first mention the attachment of Richard and Berengaria, about the year 1177. If we take that event for a datum, even allowing the princess to have been very young when she attracted the love of Richard, she must have been twenty-six, at least, before the death of his father placed him at liberty to demand her hand. Richard had another motive for his extreme desire for this alliance; he considered that his beloved mother, queen Eleanora, was deeply indebted to king Sancho, the father of Berengaria, because he had pleaded her cause with Henry II., and obtained some amelioration of her imprisonment.

Soon after Richard ascended the English throne, he sent his mother, queen Eleanora, to the court of her friend, Sancho the Wise, to demand the princess Berengaria in marriage; "for," says Vinisauf, "he had long loved the elegant girl." Sancho the Wise not only received the proposition with joy, but entrusted Berengaria to the care of queen Eleanora. The royal ladies travelled from the court of Navarre together, across Italy, to Naples, where they found the ships belonging to Eleanora had arrived in the bay. But etiquette forbade Berengaria to approach her lover till he was free from the claims of Alice; therefore she sojourned with queen Eleanora at Brindisi, in the spring of 1191, waiting the message from king Richard, announcing that he was free to receive the hand of the princess of Navarre.

It was at Messina that the question of the engagement between the princess Alice and the king of England was debated with Philip Augustus, her brother; and more than once, the potentates assembled for the crusade, expected that the forces of France and England would be called into action, to decide the right of king Richard to give his hand to another lady than the sister of the king of France.

The rhymes of Piers of Langtoft recapitulate these events with brevity and quaintness:—

"Then spake king Philip,  
And in grief said,  
'My sister Alice  
Is now forsaken,  
Since one of more riches  
Of Navarre hast thou taken.'  
When king Richard understood  
What king Philip had sworn,  
Before clergy he stood,  
And proved on that morn,

That Alice to his father  
A child had borne,  
Which his sire king Henry  
Held for his own.  
A maiden-child it was,  
And now dead it is,  
'This was a great trespass,  
And against mine own witte,  
If I Alice take.'"

<sup>1</sup> Richard and his nephew, the troubadour count of Champagne, who afterwards married Blanche, the younger sister of Berengaria, were, with Sancho the Strong, on the most intimate terms of friendship, being *fratres jurati*, or sworn brothers, according to a custom of the chivalric ages.

King Philip contended that Richard held in hand his sister's dower, the good city of Gisors. Upon this, the king of England brought the matter to a conclusion, in these words:—

“Now,” said king Richard,  
 ‘That menace may not be,  
 For thou shalt have ward  
 Of Gisors thy citée,  
 And treasure ilk a deal,’  
 Richard yielded him his right,  
 His treasure and his town,

Before witness at sight,  
 (Of clerk and eke baron.)  
 His sister he might marry,  
 Wherever God might like,  
 And, to make certainty,  
 Richard a quittance took.”

The French contemporary chroniclers, who are exceedingly indignant at the repudiation of their princess, attribute it solely to Eleanora's influence. Bernard, the Treasurer, says, “The old queen could not endure that Richard should espouse Alice, but demanded the sister of the king of Navarre for a wife for her son. At this the king of Navarre was right joyful, and she travelled with queen Eleanora to Messina. When she arrived Richard was absent, but queen Joanna was there, preparing herself to embark next day. The queen of England could not tarry, but said to Joanna—Fair daughter, take this damsel for me to the king your brother, and tell him I command him to espouse her speedily.” Joanna received her willingly, and Eleanora returned to France.”<sup>1</sup>

Piers of Langtoft resumes:—

“She be left Berengere,  
 At Richard's costage,

Queen Joanne held her dear;  
 They lived as doves in cage.”

King Richard and king Tancred were absent on a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Agatha, at Catania, where Tancred must have devoutly prayed for the riddance of his guest. Richard here presented the Sicilian king with a famous sword, pretending it was Caliburn, the brand of king Arthur, lately found at Glastonbury, during his father's antiquarian researches for the tomb of that king.

Richard then embarked in his favourite galley, named by him *Trenc-the-mere*.<sup>2</sup> He had previously, in honour of his betrothment, instituted an order of twenty-four knights, who pledged themselves in a fraternity with the king, to scale the walls of Acre; and that they might be known in the storming of that city, the king appointed them to wear a blue band of leather on the left leg, from which they were called Knights of the Blue Thong.<sup>3</sup>

The season of Lent prevented the immediate marriage of Richard and his betrothed; and, as etiquette did not permit the unwedded maiden, Berengaria, to embark in the *Trenc-the-mere* under the immediate protection of her lover, she sailed, in company with queen Joanna, in one

<sup>1</sup> Bernard le Tresorier.

<sup>2</sup> Literally meaning, *cut-the-sea*. It is Piers of Langtoft who preserves the name of this vessel.

<sup>3</sup> Hoveden. Sir Egerton Bridges names Roger St. John as one of these early knights of the Garter. St. George was the tutelary saint of Aquitaine; his name was the war-cry of the dukedom. King Richard had a vision of St. George when he undertook the crusade, and many indications throughout the chroniclers show that St. George was considered the patron saint of the expedition.

of the strongest ships, under the care of a brave knight, called Stephen de Turnham.

After these arrangements, Richard led the van of the fleet, in *Trenche-mere*, bearing a huge lantern at her poop, to rally the fleet in the darkness of night. Thus, with a hundred and fifty ships and fifty galleys, and accompanied by his bride and his sister, did Lion-hearted Richard hoist sail for Palestine, where Philip Augustus had already indolently commenced the siege of Acre.

"Syrian virgins wail and weep,  
English Richard ploughs the deep."

But we must turn a deaf ear to the bewitching metre of polished verse, and quote details taken by Piers of Langtoft from the Provençal comrade of Richard and Berengaria's crusade voyage.

"Till king Richard be forward,  
He may have no rest,  
Acres then is his tryste,  
Upon Saracen fiends,<sup>1</sup>  
To venge Jesu Christ,  
Hitherward he wends.  
The king's sister Joanne,  
And lady Berengare,  
Foremost sailed of ilk one;  
Next them his chancellor,  
Roger Mancel.  
The chancellor so light,  
His tide fell not well;

A tempest on him light,  
His ship was down borne,  
Himself there to die;  
The king's seal was lost,  
With other gallies tway.  
Lady Joanna she  
The Lord Jesu besought,  
In Cyprus she might be  
To haven quickly brought,  
The maiden Berengare,  
She was sore afright,  
That neither far nor near,  
Her king rode in sight."

Queen Joanna was alarmed for herself; but the maiden Berengaria only thought of Richard's safety.

Bernard, the treasurer, does not allow that Joanna was quite so much frightened. We translate his words: "Queen Joanna's galley sheltered in the harbour of Limoussa, when Isaac, the lord of Cyprus, sent two boats, and demanded if the queen would land? She declined the offer, saying, 'all she wanted was to know if the king of England had passed.' They replied, 'they did not know.' At that juncture Isaac approached with a great power, upon which the chevaliers, who guarded the royal ladies, got the galley in order to be rowed out of the harbour, at the first indication of hostility. Meantime Isaac, who saw Berengaria on board, demanded 'What damsel that was with them?' They declared, 'she was the sister of the king of Navarre, whom the king of England's mother had brought for him to espouse.' Isaac seemed so angry at this intelligence, that Stephen de Turnham gave signal to heave up the anchor, and the queen's galley rowed with all speed into the offing."<sup>2</sup>

When the gale had somewhat abated, king Richard, after mustering his navy, found not only that the ship was missing wherein were drowned both the chancellor of England and the great seal, but the galley that bore the precious freight of his sister and his bride. He in-

<sup>1</sup> Fieul means enemy in German, and doubtless in Anglo-Saxon.

<sup>2</sup> Guizot's edition of Bernard le Tresorier.

mediately sailed from a friendly Cretan harbour, in search of his lost ships. When arrived off Cyprus, he entered the bay of Famagusta, and beheld the galley that contained his princesses, labouring heavily, and tossing in the offing. He became infuriated with the thought that some wrong had been offered to them, and leaped, armed as he was, into the first boat that could be prepared. His anger increased on learning, that the queen's galley had put into the bay, in the storm, but had been driven inhospitably from shelter, by the threats of the Greek despot.<sup>1</sup>

At the time of Richard's landing, Isaac and all his islanders were busily employed, in plundering the wreck of the chancellor's ship, and two English transports, then stranded on the Cypriot shore. As this self-styled emperor, though in behaviour worse than a pagan, professed to be a Christian, Richard, at his first landing, sent him a civil message, suggesting the propriety of leaving off plundering his wrecks. To this Isaac returned an impertinent answer, saying, "that whatever goods the sea threw on his island he should take, without asking leave of any one."

"They shall be bought full dear, by Jesu, heaven's king!"

With this saying, Richard, battle-axe in hand, led his crusaders so boldly to the rescue, that the mock emperor and his Cypriots scampered into Limoussa, the capital of the island, much faster than they had left it.

Freed from the presence of the inhospitable despot, king Richard made signals for Joanna's galley to enter the harbour. Berengaria, half dead with fatigue and terror, was welcomed on shore by the conquering king, when, says the chronicler, "there was joy and love enow."

As soon as Isaac Comnenus was safe behind the walls of his citadel, he sent a message, to request a conference with king Richard, who expected that he had a little lowered the despot's pride; but when they met, Isaac was so full of vapouring and boasting, that he elicited from king Richard an "aside" in English; and as Cœur de Lion then uttered the only words in our language he ever was known to speak, it is well they have been recorded by chronicle.

"Ha! de debil!" exclaimed king Richard, "he speke like a fole Breton."<sup>2</sup>

As Isaac and Richard could not come to any terms of pacification, the despot retreated, to a stronghold in a neighbouring mountain: while Richard, after making a speech to the Londoners, (we hope in more choice English than the above,) instigating them to the storm of the Cypriot capital, with promise of plunder, led them on to the attack, axe in hand. The Londoners easily captured Limoussa.

Directly the coast was clear of Isaac and his myrmidons, magnificent

<sup>1</sup> Vinisauf and Piers Langtoft. *Despot* was a title given to the petty Greek potentates.

<sup>2</sup> Piers of Langtoft. This speech implied no offence to the English, but was meant as a reproach to the Bretons, who are to this day proverbial in France for their wilfulness. Besides, Richard was bitter against the Bretons, who deprived him of the society of his then acknowledged heir, Arthur, their duke. (*Vinisauf*.)

preparations were made at Limoussa, for the nuptials and coronation of king Richard and Berengaria. We are able to describe the appearance made by these royal personages, at this high solemnity. King Richard's costume, we may suppose, varied little from that in which he gave audience to the despot Isaac, a day after the marriage had taken place.<sup>1</sup>

"A satin tunic of rose-colour was belted round his waist: his mantle was of striped silver tissue, brocaded with silver half-moons: his sword, of fine Damascus steel, had a hilt of gold, and a silver-scaled sheath: on his head he wore a scarlet bonnet, brocaded in gold, with figures of animals. He bore a truncheon in his hand. His Spanish steed was led before him, saddled and bitted with gold, and the saddle was inlaid with precious stones: two little golden lions were fixed on it, in the place of a crupper: they were figured with their paws raised, in act to strike each other." In this attire, Vinisauf adds, "that Richard, who had yellow curls, a bright complexion, and a figure like Mars himself, appeared a perfect model of military and manly grace."

The effigy of queen Berengaria, at Espan, certainly presents her as a bride—a circumstance which is ascertained by the flowing tresses, royal matrons always wearing their hair covered, or else closely braided.

Her hair is parted, *à la vierge*, on the brow; a transparent veil, open on each side, like the Spanish mantillas, hangs behind, and covers the rich tresses at their length; the veil is confined by a regal diadem, of peculiar splendour, studded with several bands of gems, and surmounted by *fleurs-de-lis*, to which so much foliage is added, as to give it the appearance of a double crown; perhaps because she was crowned queen of Cyprus as well as England. Our antiquaries affirm, that the peculiar character of Berengaria's elegant but singular style of beauty, brings conviction to every one who looks on her effigy, that it is a carefully finished portrait.

At his marriage, king Richard proclaimed a grand feast.

"To Limoussa the lady was led,  
His feast the king did cry,  
Berengere will be wed,  
And, sojourn thereby.

The third day of the feast  
Bishop Bernard of Bayonne  
Newed oft the geste  
To the queen he gave the crown."<sup>2</sup>

"And there in the joyous month of May, 1191," says an ancient writer, "in the flourishing and spacious isle of Cyprus, celebrated as the very abode of the goddess of love, did king Richard solemnly take to wife his beloved lady Berengaria." By the consent of the Cypriots, wearied of Isaac's tyranny, and by the advice of the allied crusaders who came to assist at his nuptials, Richard was crowned king of Cyprus, and his bride queen of England and Cyprus.

Soon after, the fair heiress of Cyprus, daughter to the despot Isaac, came and threw herself at the feet of Richard. "Lord King," she said, "have mercy on me;" when the king courteously put forth his hand to lift her from the ground, and sent her to his wife and his sister Joanna. As many historical scandals are afloat respecting the Cypriot princess, implying that Richard, captivated by the distressed beauty, from that

<sup>1</sup> Vinisauf.

<sup>2</sup> May 12th, Stow's Chronicle, p. 194.

moment forsook his queen, it is well to observe the words of an eye-witness,<sup>1</sup> who declares "that Richard sent the lady directly to his queen, from whom she never parted till after their return to Europe."

The surrender of the Cypriot princess was followed by the capture of her father, whom the king of England bound in silver chains, richly gilt, and presented to queen Berengaria as her captive.<sup>2</sup>

After the conclusion of the nuptials, and coronation of Berengaria, her royal bridegroom once more hoisted his flag on his good galley *Trenc-the-mere*, and set sail, in beautiful summer weather, for Palestine. Berengaria and her sister-in-law again sailed, under the protection of sir Stephen de Turnham; such being safer than companionship with the warlike Richard.<sup>3</sup> Their galley made the port of Acre before the *Trenc-the-mere*.

"On their arrival at Acre, though," says Bernard le Tresorier, "it was very grievous to the king of France to know that Richard was married to any other than his sister; yet he received Berengaria with great courtesy, taking her in his arms, and lifting her on shore himself, from the boat to the beach."

Richard appeared before Acre on the long bright day of St. Barnabas, when the whole allied army, elated by the naval victory he had won by the way, marched to the beach, to welcome their companion. "The earth shook with footsteps of the Christians, and the sound of their shouts."

When Acre was taken, Richard established his queen and sister safely there. They remained at Acre with the Cypriot princess, during the whole of the Syrian campaign, under the care of Richard's castellans, Bertrand de Verdun and Stephen de Munchenis.

To the left of the mosque at Acre are the ruins of a palace, called to this day "King Richard's Palace;"<sup>4</sup> this was doubtless the abode of Berengaria.

There is not a more pleasant spot in history, than the tender friendship of Berengaria and Joanna, who formed an attachment, amidst the

<sup>1</sup>The Provençal metrical historian, who is the guide of Piers of Langtoft.

<sup>2</sup>Isaac afterwards entered among the Templars, and died in their order. Richard presented his island to Guy de Lusignan, his friend, as a compensation for the loss of Jerusalem. This dethronement of Isaac, and the captivity of his daughter, were the origin of Richard's imprisonment in Germany, as we shall presently see.

<sup>3</sup>The king's arrival was delayed by a naval battle with a rich Saracen argosie, which he captured with great plunder. The manœuvres of the *Trenc-the-mere* are thus described by the Provençal; likewise the casting of the Greek fire.

"The king's own galley  
He called it *Trenc-the-mere*;  
It was first under weigh,  
And came that ship full near,  
Who threw her buckets out.

The galley to her drew,  
The king stood full stout,  
And many of them slew.  
Though wild fire \* they cast."

<sup>4</sup>Dr. Clarke's Travels. The tradition is that Richard built the palace; but he had no time for any such work. The architecture is Saracenic, and it was doubtless a palace of the resident emir of Acre.

\* Greek fire.

perils and terrors of storm and siege, ending only with their lives.<sup>1</sup> How quaintly, yet expressively, is their gentle and feminine love for each other marked, by the sweet simplicity of the words,

“They held each other dear,  
And lived as doves in cage!”

noting, at the same time, the harem-like seclusion in which the royal ladies dwelt, while sharing the crusade campaign.

It was from the citadel of Acre that Richard tore down the banner of Leopold, archduke of Austria, who was the uncle of the Cypriot lady. Her captivity was the real matter of dispute.

We have little space to dwell on Richard's deeds of romantic valour in Palestine, on the capture of Ascalon, or the battle of Jaffa, before which city was killed Richard's good steed, named Fanuelle, whose feats in battle are nearly as much celebrated, by the troubadours, as those of his master.<sup>2</sup>

After the death of Fanuelle, Richard was obliged to fight on foot. The courteous Saladin, who saw him thus battling, was shocked that so accomplished a cavalier should be dismounted, and sent him, as a present, a magnificent Arab charger. Richard had the precaution to order one of his knights to mount the charger first. The headstrong beast no sooner found a stranger on his back, than he took the bit between his teeth, and, refusing all control, galloped back to his own quarters, carrying the Christian knight into the midst of Saladin's camp. If king Richard had ridden the wilful animal, he would, in like manner, have been at the mercy of the Saracens. Saladin was so much ashamed of the misbehaviour of his present, that he could scarcely look up while he apologized to the Christian knight; for it appeared as if he had laid a trap for the liberty of king Richard. He sent back the knight, mounted on a more manageable steed, on which Richard rode to the end of the campaign.<sup>3</sup>

King Richard, during his Syrian campaign, was once within sight of Jerusalem, but never took it. While he was with his queen Berengaria at Acre, an incident befel him, of which de Joinville, the companion in arms of St. Louis, has thus preserved the memory.

“In those times, when Hugh, duke of Burgundy, and king Richard of England, were abiding at Acre, they received intelligence that they might take Jerusalem if they chose, for its garrison had gone to the assistance of Damascus. The duke of Burgundy<sup>4</sup> and king Richard accordingly

<sup>1</sup> Madam Cottin, in her celebrated but florid romance of Mathilde, has some faint idea that a sister of Richard's shared his crusade with Berengaria; but neither that lady nor Sir Walter Scott seem aware which princess of England was the person.

<sup>2</sup> By some called Favelle, probably Flavel, meaning yellow-coloured. Vinisani declares this peerless charger was taken among the spoils of Cyprus, with another named Lyard. The cavaliers in ancient times named their steeds from their colour, as *Bayard*, bay-colour; *Lyard*, grey; *Ferraunt*, black as iron; *Flavel*, yellow or very light sorrel.

<sup>3</sup> Chronicle of Bernard le Tresorier.

<sup>4</sup> Philip Augustus and the duke of Austria decamped from the crusade at Cesarea. Hugh of Burgundy commanded the remnant of the French forces.

marched towards the holy city. Richard's battalions led the way, while Burgundy's force brought up the rear. But when king Richard drew near to Jerusalem, intelligence was brought him that the duke of Burgundy had turned back with his division, out of pure envy, that it might not be said that the king of England had taken Jerusalem. As these tidings were discussing, one of the king of England's knights cried out,—

"Sire, sire, only come hither, and I will show you Jerusalem."

"But the king, throwing down his weapons, said, with tears in his eyes, and hands uplifted to heaven,—

"Ah! Lord God, I pray thee that I may never see thy holy city, Jerusalem, since things thus happen; and since I cannot deliver it from the hands of thine enemies!" Richard could do nothing more than return to his queen and sister, at Acre.

"You must know that this king Richard performed such deeds of prowess, when he was in the Holy Land, that the Saracens, on seeing their horses frightened at a shadow or a bush, cried out to them, 'What! dost think Melech-Ric is there?' This they were accustomed to say, from the many times he had vanquished them. In like manner, when the children of Turks or Saracens cried, their mothers said to them, 'Hush, hush! or I will give you to king Richard; and from the terror of these words the babes were instantly quiet.'"

The Provençal historian affirms that the final truce between Richard and Saladin was concluded in a fair flowery meadow<sup>2</sup> near Mount Tabor; where Richard was so much charmed with the gallant bearing of the prince of Miscreants, as Saladin is civilly termed in the crusading treaties, that he declared he would rather be the friend of that brave and honest pagan, than the ally of the crafty Philip or the brutal Leopold.

The autumn of 1192 had commenced, when king Richard concluded his peace with Saladin, and prepared to return, covered with fruitless glory, to his native dominions. A mysterious estrangement had, at this time, taken place between him and Berengaria; yet the chroniclers do not mention that any rival had supplanted the queen, but merely that accidents of war had divided him from her company. As for the Cypriot princess, if he were estranged from his queen, he must likewise have been separated from the fair captive, since she always remained with Berengaria.

The king bade farewell to his queen and sister, and saw them embark, the very evening of his own departure. The queens were accompanied by the Cypriot princess, and sailed from Acre, under the care of Stephen de Turnham, September the 29th. Richard meant to return by a different route across Europe. He travelled in the disguise of a Templar, and embarked in a ship belonging to the master of the Temple. This vessel was wrecked off the coast of Istria, which forced Richard to proceed

<sup>1</sup> Joinville's words are thus paraphrased by Dryden:

"No more Sebastian's formidable name  
Is longer used to still the crying babe."

<sup>2</sup> Pier's Langtoft.



homewards through the domains of his enemy, Leopold of Austria. But to his ignorance of geography is attributed his near approach to Leopold's capital. After several narrow escapes, a page sent by Richard, to purchase provisions at a village near Vienna, was recognised by an officer who had made the late crusade with Leopold. The boy was seized, and, after enduring cruel torments, he confessed where he had left his master.

When Leopold received certain intelligence where Richard harboured, the inn was searched, but not a soul found there who bore any appearance of a king. "No," said the people, "there is no one here, without he be the Templar in the kitchen, now turning the fowls which are roasting for dinner. The officers of Leopold took the hint, and went into the kitchen, where, in fact, was seated a templar, very busy turning the spit. The Austrian chevalier, who had served in the crusade, knew him, and said quickly, "There he is—seize him!"

Cœur de Lion started from the spit, and did battle for his liberty right valiantly, but was overborne by numbers.<sup>1</sup>

The revengeful Leopold immediately imprisoned his gallant enemy, and immured him so closely in a Styrian castle, called Tenebreuse, that for months no one knew whether the lion-hearted king was alive or dead. Richard, whose heroic name was the theme of admiration in Europe, and the burden of every song, seemed vanished from the face of the earth.

Better fortune attended the vessel that bore the fair freight of the three royal ladies. Stephen de Turnham's galley arrived, without accident, at Naples, where Berengaria, Joanna, and the Cypriot princess, landed safely, and, under the care of Sir Stephen, journeyed to Rome.

The Provençal traditions declare, that here Berengaria first took the alarm, that some disaster had happened to her lord, from seeing a belt of jewels offered for sale, which she knew had been on his person when she parted from him. At Rome she likewise heard some vague reports of his shipwreck, and of the enmity of the emperor Henry VI.<sup>2</sup>

Berengaria was detained at Rome, with her royal companions, by her fear of the emperor, for upwards of half a year. At length the pope moved by her distress and earnest entreaties, sent them, under the care of Messire Mellar, one of the cardinals, to Pisa, whence they proceeded to Genoa, where they took shipping to Marseilles. At Marseilles, Berengaria was met by her friend and kinsman, the king of Arragon, who showed the royal ladies every mark of reverence, gave them safe conduct through his Provençal domains, and sent them on, under the escort of the count de Sancto Egidio.

This Egidio is doubtless the gallant Raymond count St. Gilles, who, travelling from Rome with a strong escort, offered his protection to the distressed queens; and though his father, the count of Thoulouse, had, during Richard's crusade, invaded Guienne, and drawn on himself a severe chastisement from Berengaria's faithful brother, Sancho the Strong,

<sup>1</sup> Translated from Bernard le Tresorier. Guizot's Chronicles.

<sup>2</sup> Hoveden's Chronicles.

yet the young count so well acquitted himself of his charge, that he won the affections of the fair widow, queen Joanna, on the journey.<sup>1</sup> The attachment of these lovers healed the enmity that had long subsisted, between the house of Aquitaine and that of the counts of Thoulouse, on account of the superior claims of queen Eleanora on that great fief. When Eleanora found the love that subsisted between her youngest child and the heir of Thoulouse, she conciliated his father, by giving up her rights to her daughter, and Berengaria had the satisfaction of seeing her two friends united, after she arrived at Poitou.<sup>2</sup>

Now queen Berengaria is left safely in her own dominions, it is time to return to her unfortunate lord, who seems to have been destined, by the malice of Leopold, to a life-long incarceration. The royal prisoner almost despaired of liberty, when he wrote that pathetic passage in his well-known Provençal *tenson*, saying, "Now know I for a certainty that there exists for me neither friend nor parent, or for the lack of gold and silver I should not so long remain a prisoner."

He scarcely did justice to his affectionate mother, who, directly she learned his captivity, never ceased exerting herself for his release.

Without giving any credence to the ballad story of king Richard and the lion's heart, which solely seems to have arisen from a metaphorical epithet of the troubadour Peyrols,<sup>3</sup> and is not even alluded to by the most imaginative of contemporary chroniclers, it really appears that Richard was ill-treated, during his German captivity. Matthew Paris declares he was thrown into a dungeon from whence no other man ever escaped with life, and was loaded with irons; yet his countenance was ever serene, and his conversation pleasant and facetious, with the crowds of armed guards by whom he was surrounded day and night.

It was a long time before Richard's friends could with any certainty make out his locality. He was utterly lost for some months. Blondel, a troubadour knight and poet, who had been shipwrecked with him on the coast of Istria, and who had sought him through the cities of southern Germany, sang, beneath the tower *Tenebreuse* in which he was confined, a *tenson* which Richard and he had composed together. Scarcely had he finished the first stanza,<sup>4</sup> when Richard replied with the second.

<sup>1</sup> Roger Hoveden, fol. 447.

<sup>2</sup> Piers of Langtoft says that king Richard betrothed his sister to the gallant crusader St. Gilles, in Palestine; an assertion contradicted by the enmity subsisting between the count, his father, and himself.

<sup>3</sup> In the beautiful crusade *sirvente* extant by Peyrols, he calls the king *lion-hearted Richard*. Peyrols was his fellow-soldier.—(*Sismondi*.) The earliest chronicler who mentions the lion legend is Rastall, the brother-in-law of Sir Thomas More, who had no better means of knowing the truth than we have. Here are his quaint sayings on the subject. "It is said that a lyon was put to king Richard, being in prison, to have devoured him, and when the lyon was gaping, he put his arm in his mouth and *pulled the lion by the heart so hard* that he slew the lyon; and therefore is called *Cœur de Lyon*; while others say he is called *Cœur de Lyon* because of his boldness and hardy stomach."

<sup>4</sup> Blondel's *tenson* is not preserved, but the poem Richard composed is still in the Bibliothèque Royale. There is no just reason for doubting this Provençal tradition, of Blondel's agency in the discovery of Richard. Crescembini and

Blondel directly went to queen Eleanora, and gave her tidings of the existence of her son, and she took measures for his release. Her letters to the pope are written with a passionate eloquence, highly illustrative of that tradition of the south which names her among the poets of her country.

"Mother of pity," she says, "look upon a mother of so many afflictions! or if thy holy Son, the fountain of mercy, afflicts my son for my transgression, oh let me, who am the cause, endure alone the punishment. Two sons alone remain for my succour, who but indeed survive for my misery; for king Richard exists in fetters, while prince John, brother to the captive, depopulates with the sword, and wastes with fire. The Lord is against me, his wrath fights against me, therefore do my children fight against each other!"

The queen-mother here alludes to the strife raised by prince John. He had obtained his brother's leave to abide in England, on condition that he submitted to the government established there. Queen Eleanora had intended to fix her residence at Rouen, as a central situation, between her own dominions and those of king Richard. But the confused state of affairs in England summoned her thither, February 11, 1192. She found John in open rebellion; for, stimulated by messages from Philip Augustus, offering him all Richard's continental provinces, and the hand of Alice, rejected by Richard, he aimed at nothing less than the English crown. The arrival of his mother curbed his turbulence; she told him to touch his brother's rights under peril of her curse; she forbade his disgraceful intention of allying himself with Alice; and to render such mischievous project impossible, she left that princess in close confinement at Rouen, instead of delivering her to Philip Augustus, as king Richard had agreed; so little truth is there in the common assertion, that the worthless character of John might be attributed to the encouragement his vices received from his mother; but it was the doting affection of Henry II. for his youngest son, that had this effect, as he was the child of his old age, and constantly near him, while the queen was kept in confinement, at a distance from her family.

When queen Eleanora and the chief justiciary heard of the detention of king Richard, they sent two abbots to confer with him in Germany. They met him, with his guards, on the road to Worms, where a diet of the empire was soon to be held, and were received by him with his usual spirit and animation. He inquired into the state of his friends, his subjects, and his dominions, and particularly after the health of the king of Scotland, on whose honour, he said, he entirely relied; and certainly he was not deceived in his judgment of the character of that hero. On hearing of the base conduct of his brother John, he was shocked and looked grave; but presently recovering his cheerfulness, he said, with a smile, "My brother John was never made for conquering kingdoms!"<sup>1</sup>

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most foreign historians authenticate it. The Penny Cyclopædia (not very favourable to romance) looks on it as we do. In fact, it is consistent with the manners and customs of the era.

<sup>1</sup> Hoveden.

Richard defended himself before the diet, with eloquence and pathos that drew tears from most of his hearers; and the mediation of the princes of the empire induced the emperor to accept as ransom, one hundred thousand marks of silver.

Meantime the ransom was collected in England, Normandy, and Aquitaine, to which queen Eleanora largely contributed. When the first instalment was ready, this affectionate mother and the chief justiciary set out for Germany, a little before Christmas. Queen Eleanora was accompanied by her grand-daughter Eleanora, surnamed the Pearl of Brittany. This young princess was promised, by the ransom-treaty, in marriage to the heir of Leopold of Austria.<sup>1</sup> The Cypriot princess was likewise taken from the keeping of queen Berengaria, on the demand of the emperor, and surrendered to her German relatives.<sup>2</sup>

It was owing to the exertions of the gallant Guelphic princes, his relations, that the actual liberation of Cœur de Lion was at last effected. Henry the Lion, duke of Saxony,<sup>3</sup> and his sons, appeared before the diet, and pleaded the cause of the English hero with the most passionate eloquence; they pledged their credit for the payment of the remainder of his ransom, and actually left William of Winchester, the youngest Guelphic prince, in pawn with the emperor, for the rest of the ransom.

After an absence of four years, three months, and nine days, king Richard landed at Sandwich, in April, the Sunday after St. George's day, in company with his royal mother, who had the pleasure of surrendering to him his dominions, both insular and continental, without diminution.

Eleanora's detention of the princess Alice in Normandy, had drawn on that country a fierce invasion from Philip Augustus, the result of which would have been doubtful, if the tears of Berengaria, then newly arrived in Aquitaine, had not prevailed on her noble brother, Sancho the Strong, to traverse France with two hundred choice knights. By the valour of this hero and his chivalric reinforcement, Normandy was delivered from the king of France.<sup>4</sup>

Berengaria, during the imprisonment of her royal husband, lost her father, Sancho the Wise, king of Navarre, who died in 1194,<sup>5</sup> after a glorious reign of forty-four years.

After a second coronation, Richard went in progress throughout England, with his royal mother, to sit in judgment on those castellans who had betrayed their fortresses to his brother John. At all these councils queen Eleanora assisted him, being treated by her son with the utmost reverence, and sitting in state at his right hand.

The magnanimous Cœur de Lion treated these rebels with great lenity; and when prince John, on the arrival of the king at Rouen, being

<sup>1</sup> The marriage was afterwards broken.

<sup>2</sup> She was the daughter of the duke of Austria's sister; hence the extreme hatred borne by Leopold to Richard; he considered, and not unreasonably, that Richard had disinherited his niece. The emperor Henry was her first cousin.

<sup>3</sup> Her majesty queen Victoria is the representative of this great and generous prince: and at the same time, from his wife, Matilda, eldest daughter of Henry II. derives a second direct descent from the house of Plantagenet.

<sup>4</sup> Tyrrell.

<sup>5</sup> History of Navarre.

introduced by queen Eleanora, knelt at his brother's feet for pardon, he raised him, with this remarkable expression : " I forgive you, John, and I wish I could as easily forget your offence as you will my pardon."

King Richard finished his progress by residing some months in his Angevin territories. Although he was in the vicinity of the loving and faithful Berengaria, he did not return to her society. The reason of this estrangement was, that the king had renewed his connexion with a number of profligate and worthless associates, the companions of his long bachelorhood in his father's lifetime. His conduct at this time infinitely scandalized all his subjects, as he abandoned himself to drinking and great infamy ; for which various virtuous churchmen reproved him boldly, to their credit be it spoken.

" The spring of 1195, Richard was hunting in one of his Norman forests, when he was met by a hermit, who recognised him, and preached him a very eloquent sermon on his irregular life, finishing by prophesying, that unless he repented, his end and punishment were close at hand. The king answered slightly, and went his way ; but the Easter following he was seized with a most severe illness, which threatened to be fatal, when he remembered the saying of the hermit-prophet, and, greatly alarmed, he began to repent of his sins."

Richard sent for all the monks within ten miles round, and made public confession of his iniquities, vowing, withal, that if queen Berengaria would forgive him, he would send for her, and never forsake her again. When he recovered, these good resolutions were strengthened by an interview he had with an English bishop.

When Richard first parted from the queen, he quarrelled with the virtuous St. Hugh, bishop of Lincoln, on the old ground of exacting a simoniacal tribute on the installation of the prelate into his see. Willing to evade the direct charge of selling the see, king Richard intimated that a present of a fur mantle, worth a thousand marks, might be the composition. St. Hugh said he was no judge of such gauds, and therefore sent the king a thousand marks, declaring, if he would devour the revenue devoted to the poor, he must have his wilful way. Richard pocketed the money, but some time after sent for the fur mantle. St. Hugh set out for Normandy, to remonstrate with the king on this double extortion. His friends anticipated that he would be killed ; but St. Hugh said, " I fear him not," and boldly entered the chapel where Richard was at mass, when the following scene took place.

" Give me the embrace of peace, my son," said St. Hugh.

" That you have not deserved," replied the king.

" Indeed I have," said St. Hugh, " for I have made a long journey on purpose to see my son."

So saying, he took hold of the king's sleeve, and drew him on one side. Richard smiled, and embraced the old man. They withdrew to the recess behind the altar, and sat down.

" In what state is your conscience ?" asked the bishop.

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<sup>1</sup> Tyrrell, from a Chronicle by Rigord. Maitre Rigord was originally a medical man ; he was the contemporary of king Richard and king John. His chronicle is, we think, among those edited by Guizot.

"Very easy," answered the king.

"How can that be, my son," said the bishop, "when you live apart from your virtuous queen, and are faithless to her—when you devour the provision of the poor, and load your people with heavy exactions? Are these light transgressions, my son?"

The king owned his faults, and promised amendment; and when he related this conversation to his courtiers, he added:

"Were all our prelates like Hugh of Lincoln, both king and barons must submit to their righteous rebukes!"<sup>1</sup>

Whether the interview with St. Hugh took place before, or after, the king's alarming illness, we have no data to declare; but as Richard was evidently in a tamer state, when St. Hugh visited him, than when he lawlessly demanded the fur mantle, we think the good bishop must have arrived opportunely, just as Richard was beginning to forget his sick-bed vows, without quite relapsing into his original recklessness.

The final restoration of Berengaria to the affections of her royal husband, took place a few months after, when Richard proceeded to Poitiers,<sup>2</sup> where he was reconciled to his queen, and kept Christmas, and the new year of 1196, in that city, with princely state and hospitality. It was a year of great scarcity and famine, and the beneficent queen exerted her restored influence over the heart of the king, by persuading him to give all his superfluous money in bountiful alms to the poor, and through her goodness many were kept from perishing. From that time queen Berengaria and king Richard were never parted. She found it best to accompany him in all his campaigns, and we find her with him at the hour of his death.

Higden, in the *Polychronicon*, gives this testimony to the love that Berengaria bore to Richard: "The king took home to him his queen Berengaria, whose society he had for a long time neglected, though she were a royal, eloquent, and beauteous lady, and for his love had ventured with him through the world."

The same year the king, despairing of heirs by his consort, sent for young Arthur, duke of Bretagne, that the boy might be educated at his court, as future king of England. His mother Constance, out of enmity to queen Eleanor, unwisely refused this request, and she finished her folly by declaring for the king of France, then waging a fierce war against Richard. This step cost her hapless child his inheritance, and finally his life. From this time Richard acknowledged his brother John as his heir.

The remaining three years of Richard's life were spent in petty provincial wars with the king of France. In one of his treaties, the princess Alice was at last surrendered to her brother, who gave her, with a tarnished reputation, and the dowry of the county of Ponthieu, in marriage to the count of Aumerle, when she had arrived at her thirty-fifth year.

After the reconciliation between Richard and Berengaria, the royal revenues arising from the tin-mines in Cornwall<sup>3</sup> and Devon, valued at

<sup>1</sup> Berrington.

<sup>2</sup> Rigord, *French Chron.*

<sup>3</sup> Rymer's *Fædera*.

two thousand marks per annum, were confirmed to the queen, for her dower. Her continental dower was the city of Bigorre in Aquitaine, and the whole county of Mans.

It was the lively imagination of Richard, heated by the splendid fictions of Arabian romance, that hurried him to his end. A report was brought to him, that a peasant, ploughing in the fields of Vidomar, lord of Chaluz in Aquitaine, had struck upon a trap-door which concealed an enchanted treasure,<sup>1</sup> and going down into a cave, discovered several golden statues, with vases full of diamonds, all of which had been secured in the castle of Chaluz, for the private use of the sieur de Vidomar. Richard, when he heard this fine tale, sent to Vidomar, demanding, as sovereign of the country, his share of the golden statues. The poor castellan declared that no such treasure had been found; nothing but a pot of Roman coins had been discovered, and those he was welcome to have.

As Richard had set his mind on golden statues and vases of diamonds, and had thriven so well when he demanded the golden furniture from king Tancred, it was not probable he could lower his ideas to the reality stated by the unfortunate lord of Vidomar. Accordingly, he marched to besiege the castle of Chaluz, sending word to Vidomar, either to deliver the statues, or abide the storming of the castle. To this siege queen Berengaria accompanied the king. Here Richard met his death, being pierced from the walls, by an arrow from an arbalista, or cross-bow, aimed by the hand of Bertrand de Gordon.<sup>2</sup> It was the unskilfulness of the surgeon, who mangled the king's shoulder in cutting out the arrow, joined to Richard's own wilfulness in neglecting the regimen of his physicians, that caused the mortification of a trifling wound, and occasioned the death of a hero who, to many faults, joined a redeeming generosity, that showed itself in his last moments. After enduring great agony from his wound, as he drew near to death, the castle of Chaluz was taken. He caused Bertrand de Gordon to be brought before him, and telling him he was dying, asked him whether he had discharged the fatal arrow with the intention of slaying him.

"Yes, tyrant," replied Gordon; "for to you I owe the deaths of my father and my brother, and my first wish was to be revenged on you."

Notwithstanding the boldness of this avowal, the dying king commanded Gordon to be set at liberty, and it was not his fault that his detestable mercenary general, the Fleming, Marcade, caused him to be put to a cruel death.

Richard's death took place April 6th, 1199. His queen unquestionably was with him when he died.<sup>3</sup> She corroborated the testimony that he left his dominions, and two-thirds of his treasures, to his brother John.

Richard appears to have borne some personal resemblance to his great uncle, William Rufus: Like him, his hair and complexion were

<sup>1</sup> Brompton. Newbury. Hemmingford and Wikes.

<sup>2</sup> We find the name of Gordon among the inflammatory sirventes of Bertrand de Born.

<sup>3</sup> See Hemmingford.

warm in colour, and his eyes blue, and fiercely sparkling. Like Rufus, his strength was prodigious, but he had the advantage of a tall majestic figure.<sup>1</sup> There are some points of resemblance in character, between Richard and his collateral ancestor, though Richard must be considered a more learned and elegant prince, and susceptible, withal, of more frequent impulses of generosity and penitence. They both seem to have excelled in the same species of wit and lively repartee.

At the time of king Richard's death, Matthew Paris declares queen Eleanor, his mother, was governing England, "where," adds that historian, "she was exceedingly respected and beloved."

Before the body of Cœur de Lion was committed to the grave, an additional load of anguish assailed the heart of his royal widow, through the calamities that befel Joanna, her friend, and Richard's favourite sister. The persecution on account of religion, that afterwards visited Joanna's gallant son, in the well-known war against the Albigenses, had already attacked his father incipiently. Owing to the secret agitations of the catholic clergy, the barons of Thoulouse were in arms against the gallant Raymond. Queen Joanna, though in a state little consistent with such exertions, flew to arms for the relief of her adored lord. We translate the following mournful passage from Guillaume de Puy-Laurens:<sup>2</sup>—"Queen Joanna was a woman of great courage, and was highly sensitive to the injuries of her husband. She laid siege to the castle of Casser, but, owing to the treachery of her attendants, her camp was fired. She escaped with difficulty from the burning tents, much scorched and hurt. Unsubdued by this accident, she hastened to lay her wrongs before her beloved brother king Richard. She found he had just expired as she arrived. The pains of premature child-birth seized her as she heard the dire intelligence, and she sank under the double affliction of mental and corporeal agony. With her last breath she begged to be laid near her brother Richard." To Berengaria the request was made, and the cold remains of the royal brother and sister, the dearest objects of the sorrowing queen's affections, were laid, by her pious care, side by side, in the stately abbey of Fontevraud.<sup>3</sup> The heart of Richard was bequeathed by him, to be buried in the cathedral of Rouen, where it has lately been exhumed, in 1842. When the case was unclosed, the lion-heart was found entire, but withered to the consistency of a faded leaf.<sup>4</sup>

The deaths of Richard and Joanna were immediately succeeded by that of Berengaria's only sister, Blanche. This princess had been given in marriage, by Cœur de Lion, to his nephew and friend, the troubadour-

<sup>1</sup> Vinisau.

<sup>2</sup> Guizot's *Chronicles*, vol. xv. p. 219.

<sup>3</sup> The description of Richard's statue has been given by Miss L. S. Costello in her recent charming work, entitled, "*The Boccages and the Vines*." It coincides well with the descriptions we have given of his person, from his contemporary Vinisau.

<sup>4</sup> This is from a most interesting description of the exhumation of Richard's heart, by Mr. Albert Way, in vol. xxix. *Archæologia*, p. 210; where may be found a copy of the inscription identifying it as the heart of Richard, and likewise an account of the discovery of a fine portrait statue, raised by the men of Rouen to the memory of their beloved hero.



prince, Thibaut of Champagne. The princess Blanche died the day after the birth of a son, who afterwards was the heir both of Sancho and Berengaria, and finally king of Navarre. Thus, in the course of a few short weeks, was the queen of England bereft of all that were near and dear to her. The world had become a desert to Berengaria before she left it for a life of conventual seclusion.

Queen Berengaria fixed her residence at Mans in the Orleannois, where she held a great part of her foreign dower. Here she founded the noble abbey of L'Espan.

Once queen Berengaria left her widowed retirement, when she met her brother-in-law, king John, and his fair young bride, at Chinon, her husband's treasure city. Here she compounded with the English monarch, for the dower she held in England, for two thousand marks per annum, to be paid half-yearly. After being entertained with royal magnificence, and receiving every mark of respect from the English court, the royal widow bade farewell to public splendour, and retired to conventual seclusion, and the practice of constant charity. But no sooner was John fixed firmly on the English throne, than he began to neglect the payment of the dower for which his sister-in-law had compounded; and, in 1206, there appears in the *Fœdera* a passport for the queen-dowager to come to England, for the purpose of conferring with king John; but there exists no authority whereby we can prove that she arrived in this country.

The records of 1209 present a most elaborate epistle from pope Innocent, setting forth the wrongs and wants of his dear daughter in Christ, Berengaria, who, he says, had appealed to him "with floods of tears streaming down her cheeks, and with audible cries,"—which we trust were flowers of rhetoric of the pope's secretary.<sup>1</sup> As pope Innocent threatens John with an interdict, it is pretty certain that the wrongs of Berengaria formed a clause in the subsequent excommunication of the felon king.

In 1214, when the excommunication was taken off, there exists a letter from John to "his dear sister, the illustrious Berengaria, praying that the pope's nuncio might arbitrate what was due to her." The next year brings a piteous letter from John, praying that his dearly beloved sister will excuse his delay of payment, seeing the "greatness of his adversity by reason of the wickedness of his magnates and barons," who had invited prince Louis of France to spoil her estates; "but when," says king John, "these clouds that have overcast our serenity shall disperse, and our kingdom be full of joyful tranquillity, then the pecuniary debt owed to our dear sister shall be paid joyfully and thankfully."

This precious epistle was penned July 8th, 1216, by John, but he died the succeeding October, and Berengaria's debt was added to the vast sum of his other trespasses; for "joyful tranquillity" never came for him, nor of course her time of payment.

In the reign of Henry III., Berengaria had again to require the pope's assistance, for the payment of her annuity. Her arrears at that time

<sup>1</sup> Rymer, *Fœdera*, vol. i. p. 152.

amounted to 4040*l.* sterling; but the Templars became guarantees and agents for her payments; and from that time the pecuniary troubles of Berengaria cease to form a feature in our national records.

The date of Berengaria's death has generally been fixed about the year 1230; but that was only the year of the completion of her abbey of Espan, and of her final retirement from the world; as from that time she took up her abode within its walls, and finished there her blameless life, at an advanced age, some years afterwards.

Berengaria was interred in her own stately abbey. The following most interesting particulars of her monument, we transcribe from the noble work of the late Mr. Stothard, edited by his accomplished widow, Mrs. Bray.

"When Mr. Stothard visited the abbey of L'Espan, near Mans, in search of the effigy of Berengaria, he found the church converted into a barn, and the object of his inquiry in a mutilated state, concealed under a quantity of wheat. It was in excellent preservation, with the exception of the left arm. By the effigy were lying the bones of the queen, the silent witnesses of the sacrilegious demolition of the tomb. After some search, a portion of the arm belonging to the statue was recovered." Three men who had assisted in the work of destruction stated "that the monument with the figure upon it stood in the centre of the aisle, at the east end of the church; that there was no coffin within it, but a small square box, containing bones, pieces of linen, some stuff embroidered with gold, and a slate, on which was found an inscription." The slate was found in possession of a canon of the church of St. Julien, at Mans: upon it was engraven an inscription, of which the following is a translation:—

"The tomb of the most serene Berengaria, queen of England, the noble founder of this monastery, was restored and removed to this more sacred place. In it were deposited the bones which were found in the ancient sepulchre, on the 27th May, in the year of our Lord 1672."

The sides of the tomb are ornamented with deep quatrefoils. The effigy which was upon it is in high relief. It represents the queen with her hair unconfined, but partly concealed by the coverchief, over which is placed an elegant crown. Her mantle is fastened by a narrow band crossing her breast; a large fermail, or broach, richly set with stones, confines her tunic at the neck. To an ornamental girdle, which encircles her waist, is attached a small aumoniere or purse. This greatly resembles a modern reticule, with a chain and clasped top. "The queen holds in her hand a box, singular from the circumstance of its having embossed on the cover a second representation of herself, as lying on a bier, with waxen torches burning in candlesticks on either side of her."

From early youth to her grave, Berengaria manifested devoted love for Richard; uncomplaining when deserted by him, forgiving when he returned, and faithful to his memory unto death, the royal Berengaria, queen of England, though never *in* England, little deserves to be forgotten, by any admirer of feminine and conjugal virtue.

# ISABELLA OF ANGOULÊME,

## QUEEN OF KING JOHN.

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Isabella the betrothed of Hugh de Lusignan—Parents—Inheritance—Isabella abducted by king John—Marriage to king John—Challenge of count Hugh—Queen's arrival in England—Recognition—Coronation—Arrival at Rouen—Luxury—Conclusion of Eleanor of Aquitaine's biography—Besieged—Relieved by king John—He captures count Hugh—Death of Eleanor—Effigy—Character—Queen Isabella's dower—Her return to England—Her lover, count Hugh, liberated—Isabella's son born—Her pages—Herd of white cows—King John's cruelty—His jealousy—Her children—Inheritance—Marriage of count Hugh to Isabella's little daughter—Royal dress—Murder of Matilda the Fair—John's atrocities—Meets the queen at Marlborough—She retires to Gloucester with her children—John's death—Queen's proceedings—Coronation of her son—She leaves England—Marries count Hugh—Deprived of her jointure—Detains the princess Joanna—Queen's dower restored—Her pride—Embroids her husband in war—Attempts the life of St. Louis—Humiliation of Isabella—Hated by the Poitevins—Called Jezebel—Retires to Fontevraud—Takes the veil—Dies—Tomb—Effigy—Children of second marriage.

No one would have imagined that Isabella Angoulême was destined to become the future queen of England, when king John ascended the throne; for she was then not only the engaged wife of another, but, according to the custom of the times, had been actually consigned to her betrothed, for the purpose of education.

Hugh de Lusignan, surnamed *Le Brun*,<sup>1</sup> was the affianced lord of Isabella. He was eldest son of Hugh IX., the reigning count de la Marche, who governed the provinces which formed the northern boundary of the Aquitanian dominions, called in that age French Poitou. He was a vassal prince of the French crown, and, by virtue of his authority, as marcher or guardian of the border, was a most formidable neighbour to the Aquitanian territories; for, if offended, he could at pleasure raise the *ban* and *arrière ban*, and pour on them the whole feudal militia of a large portion of France.

The mother of king John was deeply impressed with the necessity of conciliating this powerful neighbour. She had been forced, at the death of Richard, to do homage at Tours,<sup>2</sup> in person, to Philip Augustus, for Poitou, 1199; and by her wise mediation she reconciled John and Philip, negotiating an alliance between prince Louis and her grand-

<sup>1</sup> "Hugh," says G. de Nangis, "whom the people of the little town of Limoges would call the Brown, was a noble personage, brave, powerful, and possessing great riches." He did not own the *sobriquet* of *Le Brun*, but signs himself *Lusignan* in his charters.

<sup>2</sup> Guillaume de Nangis.

daughter, Blanche of Castille. She even travelled to Spain, and was present at the splendid marriage of her granddaughter, who was wedded at Burgos to prince Louis by procuration. Afterwards her daughter, the queen of Spain, accompanied her across the Pyrenees, with the young bride, to her native territories of Guienne. Queen Eleanora intended to escort Blanche to Normandy, where prince Louis waited for them,<sup>1</sup> but she fell sick with fatigue, and retreated to Fontevraud, towards the close of the year 1199. In a letter written by her on her recovery, she informs king John "that she had been very ill, but that she had sent for her favourite cousin, Americus de Thouars, from Poitou; that she was much comforted by his presence, and through God's grace she was convalescent." Queen Eleanora then proceeds to urge her son to visit immediately his Poictevin provinces, and, for the sake of their peace and preservation, she desires him to form an amicable league with the count de la Marche.<sup>2</sup>

This epistle is dated Fontevraud, 1200, and was the occasion of king John's progress to Aquitaine, in the summer; but little did the writer suppose that, before the year was expired, the whole powerful family of Lusignan would be exasperated, by king John's lawless appropriation of the bride wedded to the heir of their house.<sup>3</sup>

Isabella was the only child and heiress of Aymer or Americus, count of Angoulême, surnamed Taillefer. By maternal descent she shared the blood of the Capetian sovereigns, her mother, Alice de Courtenay, being the daughter of Peter de Courtenay, fifth son of Louis VI. king of France. The inheritance of Isabella was a beautiful province, called the Angoumois, situated in the very heart of the Aquitanian domains; with Perigord on the south, Poitou on the north, Saintonge on the west, and La Limousin on the east. The Angoumois, watered by the clear and sparkling Charente, abounded in all the richest aliments of life; altogether it was fair and desirable as its heiress. The Provençal language was at that era spoken throughout the district; Isabella of Angoulême may therefore be reckoned the third of our Provençal queens. The province to which she was heiress, had been governed by her ancestors, ever since the reign of Charles the Bald.

Isabella was actually abiding at one of the castles of her betrothed,<sup>4</sup> when her parents sent for her, to be present at a day of high ceremonial, on which they paid their homage to king John for the province of Angoumois. Indeed, it may be considered certain that the young lady

<sup>1</sup> Mezerai, vol. ii. 215, 216.

<sup>2</sup> Fœdera, vol. i. The Latin letter of the aged queen is preceded by another from Americus, urging the same advice, and giving an account of the health of his royal kinswoman. The conclusion of the life of Eleanora of Aquitaine is comprised in this biography.

<sup>3</sup> Hugh IX., according to all genealogies, was alive long after his son's betrothment to Isabella. The bereft lover of Isabella succeeded his father, by the title of Hugh X. There were thirteen counts of this house, successively, of the name of Hugh; a fact which makes their identity difficult without close investigation.

<sup>4</sup> William le Breton. Dr. Henry asserts the same, and gives Hoveden and M Paris as authorities.

himself, as their sole heir, was required to pay her personal homage to her lord paramount, as duke of Aquitaine. Her betrothed was absent, but the count of Eu, his brother, surrendered the fair heiress, at the request of her parents. He was deceived<sup>1</sup> by the message of the count of Angoulême, and incurred great blame, as if he had treacherously surrendered the young bride of his brother; but, who could deny the parents the pleasure of enjoying the society of their child?

It was at the high festival of king John's recognition in Angoulême, as sovereign of Aquitaine, that the English king first saw the beautiful fiancée of Lusignan. He was thirty-two; she had just entered her fifteenth year; notwithstanding which disparity, he became madly enamoured of her. The parents of Isabella, when they perceived their sovereign thus captivated with her budding charms, dishonourably encouraged his passion, and by deceitful excuses to the count of Eu, prevented the return of Isabella to the castle of Valence; a proceeding the more infamous, since subsequent events plainly showed that the heart of the maiden secretly preferred her betrothed.

Had John Plantagenet remained in the same state of poverty as when his father surnamed him Lackland, the fierce Hugh de Lusignan might have retained his beautiful bride; but at the time his fancy was captivated by Isabella, her parents saw him universally recognised as the possessor of the first empire in Europe. They had just done homage to him as the monarch of the south of France, and they knew he had received the elective suffrages of the English people, in preference to the hereditary right of his nephew Arthur; that he had been actually crowned king of England, and that his brow had been circled with the chaplet of golden roses which formed the ducal coronet of Normandy.

John was already married to a lady who had neither been crowned with him, nor acknowledged queen of England; yet she appears to have been the bride of his fickle choice. The son of his great uncle, Robert earl of Gloucester,<sup>2</sup> had left three daughters, co-heiresses of his vast possessions. The youth and beauty of Avis, the youngest of the sisters, induced prince John to woo her as his wife. The wedding took place at Richard's coronation, but the church forbade the pair to live together.<sup>3</sup>

The pope, who had previously commanded the divorce of Avis from John, because the empress Matilda and Robert earl of Gloucester had been half brother and sister, now murmured at the broken contract between Isabella and the heir of Lusignan; but as this betrothment does not seem to have been accompanied by any vow or promise on the part of the bride, his opposition was vain.

The lady Isabella, as much dazzled as her parents by the splendour of the triple crowns of England, Normandy, and Aquitaine, would not acknowledge that she had consented to any marriage contract with count Hugh. As Isabella preferred being a queen to giving her hand to

<sup>1</sup> See the Chronicle of William le Breton. Guizot's French Collection.

<sup>2</sup> Tyrrell.

<sup>3</sup> It must be noticed that the church forbade the wedlock of cousins of illegitimate descent, as strictly as those by marriage.

the man she really loved, no one could right the wrongs of the ill-treated Lusignan. Moreover, the mysterious chain of feudality interwove its inextricable links and meshes even round the sacrament of marriage. King John, as lord paramount of Aquitaine, could have rendered invalid any wedlock that the heiress of the Angoumois might contract without his consent; he could have forbidden his fair vassals to marry the subject of king Philip, and if she had remained firmly true to her first love, he could have declared her fief forfeited, for disobedience to her immediate lord.<sup>1</sup>

King John and Isabella were married at Bordeaux, some time in the month of August, 1200. Their hands were united by the archbishop of Bordeaux, who had previously held a synod, assisted by the bishop of Poitou, and solemnly declared that no impediment existed to the marriage.

This event threw count Hugh of Lusignan into despair; he did not, however, quietly submit to the destruction of his hopes, but challenged to mortal combat the royal interloper between him and his betrothed.<sup>2</sup> John received the cartel with remarkable coolness, saying, that if count Hugh wished for combat, he would appoint a champion to fight with him; but the count declared that John's champions were hired bravoës and vile mercenaries, unfit for the encounter of a wronged lover and true knight. Thus, unable to obtain satisfaction, the valiant Marcher waited his hour of revenge; while king John sailed with his bride in triumph to England, where he was anxious that she should be recognised as his wife, not only by the peers, but by the people.

For this purpose, being just then on his best behaviour, he called what the chroniclers term "a common council of the kingdom" at Westminster. The ancient Wittenagemot seems the model of this assembly. Here the young Isabella was introduced, and acknowledged as the queen-consort of England. Her coronation was appointed for the 8th of October, and there exists a charter in the Tower, expressing "that Isabella of Angoulême was crowned queen by the common consent of the barons, clergy, and people of England."<sup>3</sup> She was crowned on that day by the archbishop of Canterbury.

Clement Fitz-William was paid thirty-three shillings, for strewing Westminster Hall with herbs and rushes, against the coronation of lady Isabella the queen; and the chamberlains of the Norman exchequer were ordered to pay Eustace the chaplain, and Ambrose the songster, twenty-five shillings, for singing the hymn *Christus vicit*, at the unction and crowning of the said lady queen.<sup>4</sup> The expenses of her dress at this time were by no means extravagant; three cloaks of fine linen, one of scarlet cloth, and one gray pelisse, costing together twelve pounds five and fourpence, were all that was afforded to the fair Provençal bride, on this august occasion.

The whole of the intervening months, between October and Easter,

<sup>1</sup> See Bracton. "By the feudal law, any woman who is an heir forfeits her lands if she marries without her lord's consent."

<sup>2</sup> Speer's Chronicle.

<sup>3</sup> Roger Hoveden.

<sup>4</sup> Madox.

were spent by the king and queen, in a continual round of feasting and voluptuousness. At the Easter festival of 1201, they were the guests of archbishop Hubert, at Canterbury,<sup>1</sup> where they were once more crowned,<sup>2</sup> or rather, they wore their crowns, according to the ancient English custom at this high festival; it being the office of the primate of England, always to place them on the heads of the king and queen on such occasions, when he was abiding in the vicinity of royalty.

Wars, and rumours of wars, awoke the beautiful Isabella and king John from their dream of pleasure. The duchess Constance of Bretagne had eloped from her husband, the earl of Chester, and married a valiant Poictevin, sir Guy of Thouars,<sup>3</sup> who showed every demonstration of successfully asserting the claims of his son-in-law, young Arthur Plantagenet, for whose cause Anjou and Maine had already declared. Added to this alarming intelligence, was the news that Lusignan and his brother, the count of Eu, were conspiring with the family of Bretagne, and raising insurrections in Poitou, to avenge the abduction of Isabella of Angoulême.

These troubles caused Isabella and her husband to embark at Portsmouth for Normandy. King John sailed in a separate galley from the queen, and in stress of weather ran for the Isle of Wight, a place of retirement where John often abode for months together. The queen's ship was in the greatest distress, but at last made the port of Barfleur, where king John found Isabella waiting his arrival.

The conspiracy, of which the disappointed lover of Isabella was the mover, was somewhat retarded by the death of the duchess Constance<sup>4</sup> of Bretagne, in 1201, soon after the birth of her third child, the princess Alice, who was finally the heiress of the duchy.

King John, regardless of the tempest that still muttered around him, established himself at Rouen, and gave way to a career of indolent voluptuousness, little in accordance with the restless activity of his warlike nobility. In that era, when five in the morning was the established breakfast-time, and half-past ten in the forenoon the orthodox dinner-hour, for all ranks and conditions of men, the court were scandalized at finding that king John never left his pillow before mid-day, at which time his barons saw him, with contempt, issuing from the chamber of the fair Isabella.<sup>5</sup> This mode of life made him far more unpopular, in the thirteenth century, than the perpetration of a few more murders and abductions, like those with which his memory stands already charged. His young queen shared some of this blame, as the enchantress who kept him chained in her bowers of luxury. The royal pair paid, however, some attention to the fine arts, for the magnificent mosaic pavement of the palace of Rouen, was laid down while the queen kept her court there."<sup>6</sup>

Eleanora of Aquitaine—now advancing into her eightieth year—still

<sup>1</sup> Tyrrell.

<sup>2</sup> Hoveden.

<sup>3</sup> Argentre, Breton Hist. The disconsolate widowhood of Constance exists only in the pages of fiction.

<sup>4</sup> Argentre.

<sup>5</sup> Hoveden and M. Paris.

<sup>6</sup> Ducarel.

acted a queenly part on the arena of Europe. After resigning her vice-regency of England<sup>1</sup> into the hands of king John, she had assumed the sceptre of her native dominions, and was then governing Aquitaine, residing with a peace establishment, in perfect security, at her summer castle of Mirabel, in Poitou; when count Hugh de Lusignan, joining his forces with those of young Arthur of Bretagne, suddenly laid siege to the residence of the aged queen. This was a plan of count Hugh's devising, who meant, if Eleanor had been captured, to have exchanged her for his lost spouse. But Eleanor, after they had stormed the town, betook herself to the citadel of Mirabel, from whose lofty heights she scoffed at their efforts; she sent to her son for speedy aid, and, with a slight garrison and scanty provisions, held out heroically till his arrival.

Once, and once only, did the recreant John prove himself of "the right stem of great Plantagenet." When he heard of his mother's danger, he traversed France with lightning speed, and arriving unexpectedly before Mirabel, his forces hemmed in count Hugh and duke Arthur, between the town and citadel. His enemies had reckoned on his character as a sluggard and *fainéant* knight, but they reckoned in vain; he gave them fierce battle on his arrival, and overthrew them with an utter defeat, taking prisoners his rival in love, count Hugh, and his rival in empire, duke Arthur, together with four-and-twenty of the principal barons of Poitou, who had risen for the right of young Arthur, or were allies of the count. Ralph of Coggeshall and Matthew Paris declare that queen Eleanor charged her son, on her malediction, not to harm the noble boy whom he had made his prisoner. While the queen-mother retained her faculties, John contented himself with incarcerating Arthur in the citadel of Falaise; but he insulted count Hugh, the unfortunate lover of his queen, with every species of personal indignity, carrying him, and the insurgent barons of Poitou, after him wherever he went, "chained hand and foot in tumbril carts drawn by oxen." "A mode of travelling," says a Provençal chronicler, very pathetically, "to which they were not accustomed." In this manner he dragged them after him, till he made them embark with him for England.<sup>2</sup>

Queen Isabella must have exerted her utmost influence, to save the unfortunate Lusignan from the fate of his fellow-prisoners, for two-and-twenty Poictevin lords, who had been exhibited with count Hugh in the carts, were starved to death in the dungeons of Corfe Castle, by the orders of King John.<sup>3</sup> The lover of Isabella, positively refusing any submission to the abductor of his bride, was consigned to a weary confinement in the donjon of Bristol Castle, at the same time with John's other hapless prisoner, Eleanor, the sister of Arthur, surnamed the Pearl of Brittany.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> She would not recognise Arthur as the rightful heir, for fear Constance should govern England during his minority.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew Paris details this incident nearly in similar words.

<sup>3</sup> Hoveden and Dr. Henry.

<sup>4</sup> There is reason to suppose that this unfortunate lady, on whom the lineal right of the English crown devolved, took the vows after a long imprisonment. From a bundle of charters belonging to the abbey of Fontevraud, examined by



Isabella of Angoulême had not borne an heir to John, when Arthur was cut off, in 1202; therefore, after John had destroyed this promising scion of Plantagenet, the sole representative of that heroic line was his dishonoured self.<sup>1</sup> The decision of the twelve peers of France, convened to inquire into the fate of Arthur, declared Normandy forfeited by king John, in 1203. The demise of queen Eleanora, his mother, took place the year after: she lived to mourn over the dismemberment of the continental possessions of her family. Paulus Emilius, in his *Life of Philip Augustus*, declares that the queen-mother interceded strenuously for Arthur, and died of sorrow when she found the depths of guilt into which John had plunged.

The annals of the monks of Fontevraud testify, that queen Eleanora took the veil of their order, in the year 1202, and that she died in the year 1204, having been for many months wholly dead to the world.

Her last charter is given to the men of Oleron,<sup>2</sup> soon after the demise of her son, Richard I. In this document she confirms the privileges of this great maritime guild or fraternity.

Adversity evidently improved the character of Eleanora of Aquitaine; and after the violent passions of her youth had been corrected by sorrow and experience, her life exhibits many traces of a great ruler and magnanimous sovereign. A good moral education would have rendered Eleanora of Aquitaine one of the greatest characters of her time. She had been reared in her sunny fatherland, as the gay votaress of pleasure; her intellectual cultivation had been considerable, but its sole end was to enhance the delights of a voluptuous life, by calling into activity all

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Sir Thomas Phillips, Bart., it is evident that Eleanora of Bretagne was appointed, by the abbess of Fontevraud, superior of the nunnery of Ambresbury. All known hitherto of the sister of Arthur was, that she died in 1235, and was buried at Ambresbury.

<sup>1</sup> It is in an allusion to this fact that Le Breton, in his beautiful description of Arthur's death, (which, with other rich though irrelevant matter, we are forced to exclude,) makes Arthur exclaim, when pleading passionately for his life, "Ah, my uncle, spare the son of thy brother—spare thy young nephew—spare thy race!"

<sup>2</sup> Eleanora of Aquitaine, at that era the greatest naval potentate in the world, is seen in this charter to exercise full sovereignty over these merchant islanders. "To the beloved and faithful marines of Oleron," says Eleanora, "we confirm the former grants of that venerable and illustrious man, our lord Henry king of England, with whom we contracted our matrimony, on condition that the islanders of Oleron keep faith with our heirs." She names not king John as such, but this charter is followed by another from him, "confirming, for the future, all that our dearest and most venerable mother has granted during her life." Nor is this forgotten charter without a deep and vital interest to our country, for the distant isle of Oleron was the source of our maritime laws, and the cradle of our infant commerce.—(*Fœdera*, vol. i.) To one of her charters, preserved in the Fontevraud collection in the Bibliothèque Royale, examined by Sir T. Phillips, is appended the seal of Eleanora, representing her figure at full length, standing with a fleur-de-lis in her right hand; she holds in the left a globe, symbol of sovereignty, on which is a bird standing on a cross. The charter itself is a great curiosity, granting certain lands, annual value 40s., to Adam Cook and Joan his wife, on condition of their paying her every year one pound of cinnamon.—Adam was possibly her cook.

the powers of a poetic mind. Slowly and surely she learned the stern lesson of life, that power, beauty, and royalty, are but vanity, if not linked with moral excellence: she learned it too late, for the thorns her own reckless hand had planted beset her path to the latest hour of her existence.

She was buried by the side of Henry II. at Fontevraud, where her tomb was to be seen, with its recumbent statue, till the French revolution.<sup>1</sup> The face of this effigy is beautifully worked with strokes of the pencil, like miniature; the features are noble and intellectual. Eleanora wears the gorget, wimple, and cover-chef; over this head-gear is a regal diadem; the royal mantle is folded gracefully round her waist; it is of garter blue, figured with silver crescents. A book was once held in the hands clasped on the breast, but both hands and book are now broken away.<sup>2</sup>

With his mother king John lost all fear and shame. Distinct as his character stands, on a bad eminence, the reader of general history knows little of the atrocity of this man, whose wickedness was of the active and impetuous quality sometimes seen in the natives of the south of Europe, combined with the most prominent defects of the English disposition. He exhibits the traits of the depraved Provençal, whose civilization had at that era degenerated to corruption, joined to the brutality of his worst English subjects, then in a semi-barbarous state. Isabella's influence did not mend his manners; he became notoriously worse after his union with her.

Ignorance could not be pleaded as an excuse for John's enormities; like all the sons of Eleanora of Aquitaine, he had literary tastes. Some items in his close rolls prove the fact, that king John read books of a high character. His mandate to Reginald de Cornhill, requires him to send to Windsor the Romance of the History of England.<sup>3</sup> The abbot of Reading supplied his sovereign with the Old Testament; Hugh St. Victor on the Sacraments; the Sentences of Petre Lombard; The Epistles of St. Austin; Origen's Treatise; and Arian. The abbot likewise acknowledges that he has a book belonging to the king called "Pliny."<sup>4</sup>

After the dower lands of the English queens had been left free, by the death of the queen-mother, and the composition of Berengaria, king John endowed his wife most richly, with many towns in the West of England, besides Exeter, and the tin-mines of Cornwall and Devonshire. The jointure palace of the heiress of Angoulême was that ancient residence of the Conqueror, the castle of Berkhamstead, in Hertfordshire.

Queen Isabella accompanied her dishonoured lord to England, December 6, 1203. As Aquitaine, since the captivity of count Hugh de Lusignan, had been in a state of revolt, John was forced to reside in England, until he made an attempt to subdue Poitou in 1206. Having set at liberty the queen's unfortunate lover, Hugh de Lusignan, and entered into

<sup>1</sup> Her beautiful statue is still preserved, thanks to the research and zeal of our lamented antiquary Stothard.

<sup>2</sup> Montfaucon's engraving gives the hands and book.

<sup>3</sup> April 29, 1205. See *Excerpta Historica*, 393; the word *romance*, it must be remembered, merely meant prose narration.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* 399.

a pacific treaty with him, he embarked with him, and they soon after landed at Rochelle. By the influence of Lusignan, the principal part of the South of France again owned the sway of the line of the Plantagenet.

Queen Isabella, during the king's absence, brought him an heir at Winchester, who received the name of Henry. After his return to England, king John began utterly to disregard all the ancient laws of his kingdom; and when the barons murmured, he required from them the surrender of their children as hostages. In the Tower rolls exist documents proving that those young nobles were appointed to wait on his queen<sup>1</sup> at Windsor and Winchester, where they attended her in bands, serving her at meals, and following her at cavalcades and processions.

The tragedy of the unfortunate family of De Braose, was occasioned by the resistance of the parents to these ordinances, in 1211. King John had demanded the eldest son of William de Braose, lord of Bramber, in Sussex, as a page to wait on queen Isabella, meaning him in reality as a hostage for his father's allegiance. When the king's message was delivered at Bramber by a courtier who bore the ominous name of Mauluc,<sup>2</sup> the imprudent lady de Braose declared in his hearing, "that she would not surrender her children to a king who had murdered his own nephew." The words of the unfortunate mother were duly reported, by the malicious messenger. The lady de Braose repented of her rashness when it was too late, and strove in vain to propitiate queen Isabella by rich gifts. Among other offerings, she sent the queen a present of a herd of four hundred cows and one beautiful bull: this peerless herd was white as milk, all but the ears, which were red.<sup>3</sup>

This strange present to Isabella did not avert the deadly wrath of king John; for he seized the unfortunate family at Meath in Ireland, whither they had fled for safety. The lord of Bramber, his wife and children, were conveyed to the old castle at Windsor, and enclosed in a strong room, where they were deliberately starved to death. Father, mother, and five innocent little ones, suffered, in our England, the fate of count Ugolino and his family; an atrocity compared with which the dark stain of Arthur's murder fades to the hue of a venial crime.

The passion of John for his queen, though it was sufficiently strong to embroil him in war, was not exclusive enough to secure conjugal fidelity; the king tormented her with jealousy, while on his part he was far from setting her a good example, for he often invaded the honour of the female nobility. The name of the lover of Isabella has never been ascertained, nor is it clear that she was ever guilty of any dereliction from rectitude. But John revenged the wrong that, perhaps, only existed in his malignant imagination, in a manner peculiar to himself.

<sup>1</sup> Two of these hostage children, Elizabeth heiress of sir Ralph Deincourt of Sizergh Castle, in Westmoreland, and Walter the heir of sir Thomas Strickland, of Strickland, formed an attachment for each other at the court of Isabella, and afterwards married.

<sup>2</sup> Peter de Mauluc was said to be the assistant of John in the murder of Arthur; hence the taunt of the lady de Braose.—(Speed.) She was a Norman baroness by birth, her name Matilda St. Valery.

<sup>3</sup> An ancient Flemish chronicle cited by Speed and Holingshed.

He made his mercenaries assassinate the person whom he suspected of supplanting him in his queen's affections, with two others supposed to be accomplices, and secretly hung their bodies over the bed of Isabella.<sup>1</sup> Her surprise and terror when she discovered them may be imagined, though it is not described by the monastic writers who darkly allude to this dreadful scene.

After this awful tragedy, the queen was consigned to captivity, being conveyed to Gloucester abbey, under the ward of one of her husband's mercenary leaders. In a record-roll of king John, he directs Theodoric de Tyes "to go to Gloucester with our lady queen, and there keep her in the chamber where the princess Joanna had been nursed, till he heard further from him." Joanna was born in 1210, according to the majority of the chroniclers. The queen's disgrace was about two years after the birth of her daughter.

The queen had brought John a lovely family, but the birth of his children failed to secure her against harsh treatment: she was at this time the mother of two sons, and a daughter.<sup>2</sup> Isabella inherited the province of the Angoumois in the year 1213, at which time it is probable that a reconciliation took place between the queen and her husband, since her mother, the countess of Angoulême, came to England, and put herself under the protection of John. Soon after he went to Angoulême, with Isabella.

To facilitate the restoration of the Poictevin provinces, again seized by Philip Augustus, John found it necessary to form an alliance with his former rival, count Hugh de Lusignan.<sup>3</sup> Although that nobleman had been set at liberty some years, he perversely chose to remain a bachelor, in order to remind all the world of the perfidy of that faithless beauty who had broken her betrothment for a crown. The only stipulation which could induce him to assist king John was, that he would give him the eldest daughter of Isabella, as a wife, in the place of the mother. In compliance with this singular request, the infant princess Joanna was betrothed to him immediately, and forthwith delivered to him, that she might be educated and brought up in one of his castles, as her mother had been before her.<sup>4</sup> After this alliance, count Hugh effectually cleared the Poictevin borders of the French invaders; and king John, flushed with his temporary success, returned with his queen, to plague England with new acts of tyranny.<sup>5</sup>

Although the most extravagant prince in the world in regard to his own personal expenses, John was parsimonious enough toward his beautiful queen. In one of his wardrobe-rolls there is an order for a gray cloth *pelisson* for Isabella, guarded with nine bars of gray fur. In king John's wardrobe-roll is a warrant<sup>6</sup> for giving out cloth, to make

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Lingard, reign of John.

<sup>2</sup> Her second son, Richard, was born 1208, and her daughter Joanna at Gloucester.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew Paris.

<sup>4</sup> Count Hugh is called the son of count de la Marche, his father being alive. *Fœd.*, vol. i.

<sup>5</sup> Oct. 20, 1214.

<sup>6</sup> It was not beneath the attention of the English monarch to order the minutest articles of dress for himself and his queen. Indeed, the wardrobe accounts of

two robes for the queen, each to consist of five ells; one of green cloth, the other of brunet. The green robe, lined with cendal or sarcenet, is considered worth sixty shillings. The king likewise orders for his queen cloth for a pair of purple sandals, and four pair of women's boots, one pair to be embroidered in circles round the ankles. There is, likewise, an item for the repair of Isabella's mirror.<sup>1</sup> The dress of John was costly and glittering in the extreme, for he was, in addition to other follies and frailties, the greatest fop in Europe. At one of his Christmas festivals, he appeared in a red satin mantle, embroidered with sapphires and pearls, a tunic of white damask, a girdle set with garnets and sapphires, while the baldrick that crossed from his left shoulder to sustain his sword, was set with diamonds and emeralds, and his white gloves were adorned, one with a ruby, and the other with a sapphire.<sup>2</sup> The richness of king John's dress, and the splendour of his jewellery, partly occasioned the extravagant demands he made on the purses of his people, both church and laity; he supplied his wants by a degree of corruption that proves him utterly insensible to every feeling of honour, both as a man and a king, and shamelessly left rolls and records whereby posterity were enabled to read such entries as the following ludicrous specimens of bribery.<sup>3</sup>

"Robert de Vaux gave five of his best palfreys, that the king might hold his tongue about Henry Pinel's wife."

What tale of scandal king John had the opportunity of telling, dependent saith not; but the entry looks marvellously undignified, in regal accounts, and shows that shame as well as honour was dead in the heart of John.

"To the Bishop of Winchester is given one tun of good wine, for not putting the king in mind to give a girdle to the countess of Albemarle."

The scarcity of coin, and absence of paper-money, made bribery remarkably shameless in those days; palfreys prancing at the levee, and the four hundred milk-white kine of the unfortunate lady de Braose, lowing before the windows of Isabella, must have had an odd effect.<sup>4</sup>

The queen, soon after her return to England in 1214, was superseded in the fickle heart of her husband, by the unfortunate beauty of Matilda Fitz-Walter, surnamed the Fair. The abduction of this lady, who, to

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the sovereigns of the middle ages prove that they kept a royal warehouse of mercery, haberdashery, and linen, from whence their officers measured out velvets, brocade, sarcenets, tissue, gauzes, and trimmings of all sorts; and through the reign of Henry VIII., at least, the grants for this haberdashery were signed by the warlike hand of the English sovereign. See the order for lady Bedingfeld's court mourning, quoted by Dr. Lingard at the end of the reign of that monarch; in which even her caps are discussed.

<sup>1</sup> *Excerpta Historica*, p. 398.

<sup>2</sup> Such ornamented gloves are seen on his effigy at Worcester cathedral, and on that of his father at Fontevraud.

<sup>3</sup> *Ypo Neustria*. Matt. Westminster.

<sup>4</sup> It realizes the satire of Pope, applied to the Walpole ministry. The poet, lauding the convenience of bank notes in such cases, contrasts the clumsy conveyance of tangible property as bribes, saying,

"A hundred oxen at thy levee roar."

do her justice, thoroughly abhorred the royal felon, was the exploit which completed the exasperation of the English barons, who flew to arms for the purpose of avenging the honour of the most distinguished among their class, lord Fitz-Walter, father of the fair victim of John.

Every one knows that, clad in steel, they met their monarch John at Runnymede, and there

"In happy hour  
Made the fell tyrant feel his people's power."

The unfortunate Matilda, who had roused the jealousy of the queen, and excited the lawless passion of John, was supposed to be murdered by him, in the spring of the year 1215.<sup>1</sup>

After the signature of Magna Charta, king John retired in a rage to his fortress at Windsor, the scene of many of his secret murders. Here he gave way to tempests of personal fury, resembling his father's bursts of passion; he execrated his birth, and, seizing sticks and clubs, vented his maniacal feelings by biting and gnawing them, and then breaking them in pieces. While these emotions were raging, mischief matured itself in his soul; for after passing a sleepless night at Windsor, he departed for the Isle of Wight,<sup>2</sup> where he sullenly awaited the arrival of some bands of mercenaries he had sent for from Brabant and Guienne, with whose assistance he meant to revenge himself on the barons. In the fair isle John passed whole days, idly sauntering on the beach, chatting familiarly with the fishers, and even joining in piratical expeditions with them against his own subjects. He was absent some weeks; every one thought he was lost, and few wished that he might ever be found. He emerged from his concealment in good earnest, when his mercenary troops arrived, and then he began that atrocious progress across the island, always alluded to by his contemporaries with horror. One trait of his conduct shall serve for a specimen of the rest:—The king every morning took delight in firing, with his own hands, the house that had sheltered him the preceding night.

In the midst of this diabolical career he reconciled himself to Isabella, whom he had kept in a state of palace restraint ever since the abduction of Matilda the Fair.<sup>3</sup> The queen advanced as far as Marlborough to

<sup>1</sup> "About the year 1215," saith the book of Dunmow, "there arose a *great discord between king John and his barons, because of Matilda, surnamed the Fair, daughter of Robert lord Fitz-Walter, whom the king unlawfully loved, but could not obtain her, nor her father's consent thereto. Whereupon the king banished the said Fitz-Walter, the most valiant knight in England, and caused his castle in London, called Baynard, and all his other dwellings, to be spoiled. Which being done, he sent to Matilda the Fair about his old suit in love, and because she would not agree to his wickedness, the messenger poisoned an egg, and bade her keepers, when she was hungry, boil it and give her to eat. She did so, and died.*" Tradition points out one of the lofty turrets, perched on the top, at the corner of the White Tower of London, as the scene of this murder. She was conveyed there, after the storming of Baynard's castle, in 1213. In a like spirit to count Julian, her enraged father brought the French into England, to avenge his daughter. Matilda's tomb and effigy are still to be seen in the priory church of Little Dunmow in Essex.—See *Braley's Graphic Perambulator*.

<sup>2</sup> Barnard's History of England.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew of Westminster.

meet him, where they abode some days, at the royal palace on the forest of Savernake,<sup>1</sup> which was one of the principal dower castles of our queens. At this time there is an intimation on the record-rolls, that the new buildings, at the queen's castle on Savernake, were completed; among which were kitchens, with fireplaces for roasting oxen whole.

John consigned to the care of Isabella, at this time, his heir prince Henry, with whom she retired to Gloucester, where the rest of the royal children were abiding. The queen had, in the year 1214, become the mother of a second daughter, and in the succeeding year she gave birth to the princess Isabella.<sup>2</sup>

Scarcely had the queen retreated to the strong city of Gloucester, when that invasion by prince Louis of France took place, which is so well known in general history. The barons, driven to desperation by John's late outrages, offered the heir of France the crown, if he would aid them against their tormentor.<sup>3</sup>

Hunted into an obscure corner of his kingdom, in the autumn of 1216, king John confided his person and regalia to the men of Lynn in Norfolk. But as his affairs summoned him northward, he crossed the Wash to Swinshead Abbey, in Lincolnshire. The tide coming in unexpectedly, swept away part of his army and his baggage. His splendid regalia was swallowed in the devouring waters, and John himself scarcely escaped with life. The king arrived at Swinshead Abbey unwell and dispirited, and, withal, in a malignant ill temper. As he sat at meat in the abbot's refectory, he gave vent to his spleen, by saying, "that he hoped to make the half-penny loaf cost a shilling before the year was over." A Saxon monk heard this malicious speech with indignation: if the evidence of contemporary historians may be believed, John uttered this folly at dinner, and before his dessert was ended, he was poisoned in a dish of autumn pears.

In all probability the king was seized with one of those severe typhus fevers, often endemic, in the fenny countries, at the close of the year. The symptoms of alternate cold and heat, detailed by the chroniclers, approximate closely with that disease.

Whether by the visitation of God, or through the agency of man, the fact is evident, that king John was stricken with a fatal illness at Swinshead; but, sick as he was, he ordered himself to be put in a litter, and carried forward on his northern progress. At Newark he could proceed no further, but gave himself up to the fierce attacks of the malady. He sent for the abbot and monks of Croxton, and made full confession of all his sins; (no slight undertaking;) he then forgave his enemies, and enjoined those about him to charge his son, Henry, to do the same; and, after taking the eucharist, and making all his officers swear fealty to his eldest son, he expired, commending his soul to God, and his body to burial in Worcester Cathedral, according to his especial directions, close

<sup>1</sup> See *Fædera*, in many deeds.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards married to the emperor of Germany.

<sup>3</sup> Louis' claim was founded on his marriage with the celebrated Blanche of Castille, niece to John.

to the grave of St. Wulstan,<sup>1</sup> a Saxon bishop, of great reputation for sanctity, lately canonized. This vicinity the dying king evidently considered likely to be convenient, for keeping his corpse from the attacks of the evil one whom he had indefatigably served during his life. His contemporary historians did not seem to think that this arrangement, however prudently planned, was likely to be effectual in altering his destination; as one of them sums up his character in these words of terrific energy—"Hell felt itself defiled by the presence of John."

The queen and the royal children were at Gloucester, when the news of the king's death arrived. Isabella and the earl of Pembroke immediately caused prince Henry to be proclaimed, in the streets of that city.

In the coronation letter of Henry III. is preserved the memory of a very prudent step, taken by Isabella as queen-mother. As the kingdom was in an unsettled and tumultuous state, and as she was by no means assured of the safety of the young king, she provided for the security of both her sons, by sending her son Richard to Ireland, which was at that time loyal and tranquil. The boy-king says in his proclamation,<sup>2</sup> "The lady queen our mother has upon advice, and having our assent to it, sent our brother Richard to Ireland, yet so that you and our kingdom can speedily see him again."

Only nine days after the death of John, the queen caused her young son to be crowned, in the cathedral of Gloucester.<sup>3</sup> Although so recently a widow, the extreme exigencies of the times forced Isabella to assist at her child's coronation. The regal diadem belonging to his father being lost in Lincoln Washes,<sup>4</sup> and the crown of Edward the Confessor being far distant in London, the little king was crowned with a gold throat collar belonging to his mother. A very small part of England recognised the claims of Isabella's son; even Gloucester was divided, the citizens who adhered to the young king being known by the cross of Aquitaine, cut in white cloth on their breasts.

<sup>1</sup>The noble monument of king John, in black marble, with his fine effigy, is to be seen in Worcester cathedral, though now removed to the choir, at some distance from the desirable neighbourhood of the Saxon saint. John was reckoned by his contemporaries extremely handsome; but the great breadth over the cheeks and ears, which is the leading characteristic of this monarch, is not consistent with modern ideas of beauty. In the mere animal comeliness of complexion and form he probably excelled.

<sup>2</sup>Foedera, vol. i.

<sup>3</sup>Speed's Chronicle.

<sup>4</sup>Reports were circulated in Norfolk, that the royal circlet of king John was certainly found, in the late excavation for the Eau brink drainage, near the spot indicated by chroniclers as the scene of this loss; and a well-sinker, who knew nothing of history, informed a gentleman of Norfolk, of a curious discovery he made when digging for a well in the same neighbourhood. "I found," said he, "in the course of my well-digging, a king's crown." On being desired to describe it, he declared that it was no larger than the top of a quart pot, but cut out in ornaments round the top; that it looked black, and that he had no idea of the value, for when a Jew pedlar offered him three pounds ten shillings, he was glad to accept it, but he afterwards heard that the Jew had made upwards of fifty pounds by the speculation. This was most likely one of the golden coronals or circlets fixed at the back of the king's helmets, as its size shows that it was not the regal crown.



Henry was then just nine years old; but though likely to be a minor for some years, it must be observed that the queen-mother was offered no share in the government; and as queens of England had frequently acted as regents, during the absence of their husbands or sons, this exclusion is a proof that the English held Isabella in little esteem.

London and the adjacent counties were then in the hands of Louis of France. Among other possessions, he held the queen's dower-palace of Berkhamstead, which was strongly garrisoned with French soldiers. However, the valour and wisdom of the protector Pembroke, and the intrepidity of Hubert de Burgh, in a few months cleared England of these intruders.

Before her year of widowhood had expired, Isabella retired to her native city, Angoulême, July, 1217. The princess Joanna resided in the vicinity of her mother's domains, being at Valence, the capital of the count de la Marche. Nothing could be more singular than the situation of queen Isabella, as mother to the promised bride of count Hugh, and that bride but seven years old. The valiant Lusignan himself was absent from his territories, venting his superfluous combativeness, and soothing his crosses in love, by a crusade which he undertook in 1216. The demise of his father obliged him to revisit Poitou in 1220, where he was frequently in company with the queen of England, who was at the same time his false love, and the mother of his little wife. Isabella, at the age of thirty-four, still retained that marvellous beauty which had caused her to be considered the Helen of the middle ages. It is therefore no great wonder, that she quickly regained her old place in the constant heart of the valiant Marcher. Accordingly, we find this notation in Matthew of Westminster, that in the year 1220, or "about that time, Isabella, queen-dowager of England, having before crossed the seas, took to her husband *her former spouse*, the count of Marche, in France, without leave of her son, the king, or his council."<sup>1</sup> As the queen took this step without asking the consent of any one in England, the council of regency withheld her dower from her, to the indignation of her husband. A very few months afforded them an opportunity of righting this wrong.

The countess-queen and the count de la Marche had still retained at Valence the little Joanna, who had been deprived by her mother of her mature bridegroom. But it so happened that the council of Henry III. greatly needed the restoration of the princess, in order to make peace with Alexander, king of Scotland; upon which king Henry took the opportunity of writing a congratulatory epistle to his mother on her marriage, and demanding the restoration of his sister; but queen Isabella, highly incensed at the deprivation of her jointure, positively refused to give up the princess. The young king then wrote to the pope, earnestly requesting him to excommunicate his mother and father-in-law: the latter he vituperated as a very Judas. Before the pope complied with this dutiful request, he inquired a little into the merits of the case, and

<sup>1</sup> Matthew Paris. Beside M. Paris, all historians, ancient and modern, mention the romantic re-marriage. Rymer's *Fædera*, Hemmingford, Wikes, Rapin, p. 315. Carte, Tyrrell, Collier, and Moreri.

found that Henry III. had deprived his royal mother of all, in England and Guienne, that appertained to her as the widow of king John, because she did not ask his leave to marry a second time; and as he was only fourteen, that was scarcely to be expected. After a most voluminous correspondence between the contending parties, on the king of Scots declaring he would not be pacified without a wife from the royal family, Henry was glad to make up the difference with his mother, by paying her arrears of jointure, and receiving from the count de la Marche the princess Joanna.<sup>1</sup>

The king of France was the liege lord of count de la Marche; but the countess-queen was infuriated whenever she saw her husband arrayed against the territories of her son, and her sole study was, how French Poitou could be rendered independent of the king of France. "She was a queen,"<sup>2</sup> she said, "and she disdained to be the wife of a man who had to kneel before another." Another cause of violent irritation existed:—Prince Alphonso, the brother of the king of France, had refused her daughter, by the count de la Marche, and married Jane of Thoulouse; on this occasion king Louis created his brother, count of Poitiers, and required the count de la Marche, as possessor of Poitou, to do him homage. Isabella manifested great disdain at the heiress of Thoulouse<sup>3</sup> taking precedence of *her*, the crowned queen of England—mother, as she said, of a king and an empress.

From that time she suffered the unfortunate count de la Marche to have no domestic peace, till he transferred his allegiance from Louis IX. to her son Henry III., who undertook the conquest of French Poitou at the instigation of his mother.<sup>4</sup>

Several years of disastrous warfare ensued. The husband of Isabella nearly lost his whole patrimony, while the district of the Angoumois was overrun by the French.<sup>5</sup> After king Henry III. lost the battle of Taillebourg, fought on the banks of Isabella's native river, the sparkling Charente, a series of defeats followed, which utterly dispossessed both the queen-mother and her husband of their territories. Henry III. fled to Bourdeaux, scarcely deeming himself safe in that city; while the queen-mother, whose pride had occasioned the whole catastrophe, had no resource but to deliver herself up to the mercy of the king of France. The count de la Marche had fought like a lion; but his valour availed little, when the minds of his people were against the war.

In this dilemma, the countess-queen and her lord determined to send their heir, the young Hugh de Lusignan, to see how king Louis seemed disposed towards them. That amiable monarch received the son of his enemies with such benevolence, that the count de la Marche, taking his

<sup>1</sup> M. Paris. The princess was married to Alexander II. at York, Midsummer, 1221. Though only eleven years of age, her marriages had already twice stopped a cruel war. She was a child of angelic beauty and sweetness of disposition, and was surnamed, by the English, Joan Makepeace. She died, when twenty-six, of a decline, produced by a change of climate. The king of Scots, at this pacification, received back his two sisters, who had been pledged to king John for a sum of money.

<sup>2</sup> Speed.

<sup>3</sup> Tillet de Recueil, 1241.

<sup>4</sup> M. Paris.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

wife and the rest of the children with him, to the camp of St. Louis, threw themselves at his feet, and were very kindly received, on no worse conditions, than doing homage to prince Alphonso, for three castles.

It might have been supposed that the restless spirit of Isabella was tamed by these disasters; but soon after, in 1244, the life of king Louis was twice attempted: the last time the assassins were convicted, and before their execution confessed that they had been suborned, by queen Isabella, to poison the good king of France. Isabella gave colour to the accusation by flying for sanctuary to the abbey of Fontevraud, "where she was hid in the secret chamber, and lived at her ease," says Matthew Paris; "though the Poitevins and French, considering her as the origin of the disastrous war with France, called her by no other name than Jezebel, instead of her rightful appellation of Isabel." Matthew says, the whole brunt of this disgraceful business fell upon her unfortunate husband and son. They were seized, and about to be tried on this accusation of poisoning, when count de la Marche made appeal to battle, and offered to prove in combat, with his accuser Alphonso, brother to St. Louis, that his wife was belied. Alphonso, who appears to have had no great stomach to the fray, declined it, on the plea that count Hugh was so "treason-spotted," it would be pollution to fight with him. Then Isabella's young son Hugh dutifully offered to fight, in the place of his sire, and Alphonso actually appointed the day and place to meet him; nevertheless, he again withdrew, excusing himself on the plea of the infamy of the family. "This sad news," says old Matthew, "for evil tidings hasten fast, soon reached the ears of Isabella, in the secret chamber of Fontevraud."

The affront offered to her brave young son seems to have broken the heart of Isabella. She never came out of the secret chamber again, but, assuming the veil, died of a decay brought on by grief, in the year 1246.

As a penance for her sins, she desired to be buried humbly, in the common cemetery at Fontevraud. Some years afterwards her son, Henry III., visiting the tombs of his ancestors at Fontevraud, was shocked at being shown the lowly grave of his mother: he raised for her a stately tomb, with a fine enamelled statue, in the choir at Fontevraud, near Henry II. and Eleonora of Aquitaine, her mother-in-law.<sup>1</sup>

Her statue is of fine proportions, clad in flowing garments, confined to the waist by a girdle. She wears the wimple veil, and conventual frontlet. Her face is oval, with regular and majestic features.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matthew of Westminster.

<sup>2</sup> The state of the royal effigies at Fontevraud, in the present century, is thus described in Stothard's *Monumental Antiquities*, by the admirable pen of Mrs. Bray. "When Mr. Stothard first visited France, during the summer of 1816, he came direct to Fontevraud to ascertain if the effigies of our ancient kings who were buried there were to be seen. He found the abbey converted into a prison, and discovered in a cellar belonging to it the effigies of Henry II., his queen Eleonora of Aquitaine, Richard I., and Isabella of Angoulême. The chapel where the figures were placed previous to the revolution was entirely destroyed, and these invaluable effigies then removed to a cellar, where they were ex-

The count de la Marche survived his unhappy partner but till the year 1249. The enmity between him and the family of St. Louis entirely disappeared after the death of Isabella; for her husband shared the crusade that the king of France made to Damietta, and fell, covered with wounds, in one of the eastern battles, fighting by the side of his old antagonist, Alphonso, count of Poitiers.<sup>1</sup>

Isabella left several children by this marriage; five sons, and at least three daughters. Her eldest son, by the count de la Marche,<sup>2</sup> succeeded not only to his father's patrimony, but to his mother's inheritance of the Angoumois. He is reckoned in the genealogy of Lusignan as Hugh XI., count de la Marche and Angoulême.

The count de la Marche sent all his younger sons, with his daughter Alice, to Henry III., who provided for them very liberally, to the great indignation of his subjects.

posed to constant mutilation from the prisoners who came to draw water from a well twice every day. It appeared that they had sustained severe injury, as Mr. Stothard found the broken fragments scattered round. He made drawings of the figures, and upon his return to England suggested to our government the propriety of obtaining possession of these interesting relics, that they might be placed among the rest of our royal effigies in Westminster Abbey. The application failed, but it succeeded in calling the attention of the French government towards these remains, and in preserving them from total destruction."

<sup>1</sup> Montfaucon, who gives the date of his death 1249.

<sup>2</sup> As a modern writer has committed the strange blunder of marrying Isabella to her own son, instead of her former husband, the following note is subjoined from Speed, no slight authority in matters of genealogy.

"Queen Isabella, surviving king John, was married to Hugh le Brun, earl of March, and lord of Lusignan and Valence in Poitou, *to whom first she should have been married, but yet (as seemeth) continued her affection to him till now.* By him she had divers children, greatly advanced by Henry III., their half brother (and as greatly maligned by his subjects). The eldest was Hugh, earl of March and Angoulême; the second Guy de Lusignan, slain at the battle of Lewes; the third, William de Valence, earl of Pembroke; the fourth, Aymer de Valence, bishop of Winchester; the fifth, Geoffrey of Lusignan, lord of Hastings."

# ELEANOR OF PROVENCE,

SURNAMED LA BELLE,

QUEEN OF HENRY III.

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## CHAPTER I.

Eleanor of Provence—Parentage—Birth—Talents—Poem written by her—Her beauty—Henry accepts Eleanor without dowry—Escorted to England—Married at Canterbury—Crowned at Westminster—Costume and jewels—Henry's attention to dress—Rapacity of the queen's relatives—Birth of her eldest son—Paintings in her chambers—Attempt on the king's life—Eleanor rules the king—Birth of her eldest daughter—Queen accompanies the king to Guienne—Birth of the princess Beatrice—Return to England—Turbulence of Eleanor's uncle—Eleanor's second son born—King and queen robbed on the highway—Eleanor's unpopularity in London—Dower—Eleanor's mother—King pawns plate and jewels—Marriage of princess Margaret—Projected crusade—Eleanor appointed queen-regent—King's departure for Guienne—Makes his will—Bequeaths royal power to Eleanor—Princess Katharine born.

ELEANOR of Provence was perhaps the most unpopular queen that ever presided over the court of England. She was unfortunately called to share the crown and royal dignity of a feeble-minded sovereign, at an earlier age than any of her predecessors; for, at the time of her marriage with king Henry, she had scarcely completed her fourteenth year,<sup>1</sup> a period of life when her education was imperfect, her judgment unformed, and her character precisely that of a spoiled child, of precocious beauty and genius—perilous gifts! which in her case served but to foster vanity and self-sufficiency.

This princess was the second of the five beautiful daughters of Berenger, count of Provence, the grandson of Alfonso, king of Arragon. Berenger was the last and most illustrious of the royal Provençal counts; and even had he not been the sovereign of the land of song, his own verses would have entitled him to a distinguished rank among the troubadour poets.<sup>2</sup> His consort Beatrice, daughter of Thomas, count of Savoy, was scarcely less celebrated for her learning and literary powers.<sup>3</sup>

From her accomplished parents the youthful Eleanor inherited both a natural taste, and a practical talent for poetry, which the very air she

<sup>1</sup> M. Paris.

<sup>2</sup> Sismondi's *Literature of the South*.

<sup>3</sup> According to some writers, she was the friend and correspondent of Richard Cœur de Lion, and it has been generally supposed that the concluding verse *Envoyé*, in his celebrated prison poem, beginning "*Comtesse*," is addressed to this lady, to whom also he is said to have sent a copy of his sonnets. Sismondi and J. P. Andrews.

breathed tended to foster and encourage. Almost before she entered her teens, she had composed an heroic poem in her native Provençal tongue.

This work is still in existence, and is to be found in MS., in the royal library at Turin.<sup>1</sup> The composition of this romance was the primary cause to which the princess, or (as she was then styled) the infanta of Provence, owed her elevation to the crown-matrimonial of England. Her father's major-domo and confidant, Romeo,<sup>2</sup> was the person to whose able management count Berenger was indebted for his success in matching his portionless daughters, with the principal potentates of Europe. No doubt, to Romeo's sagacious advice the following steps taken by young Eleanor may be attributed.

She sent to Richard, earl of Cornwall, Henry the Third's brother, a fine Provençal romance of her own inditing,<sup>3</sup> on the adventures of Blandin of Cornwall, and Guillaume of Miremas, his companion, who undertook great perils for the love of the princess Briende and her sister Irlande (probably Britain and Ireland), dames of incomparable beauty.

Richard of Cornwall, to whom the young infanta sent, by way of a courtly compliment,<sup>4</sup> a poem so appropriately furnished with a paladin of Cornwall for a hero, was then at Poitou, preparing for a crusade, in which he hoped to emulate his royal uncle and namesake, Richard I. He was highly flattered by the attention of the young princess, who was so celebrated for her personal charms that she was called Eleanor la Belle; but as it was out of his power to testify his grateful sense of the honour, by offering his hand and heart to the royal Provençal beauty in return for her romantic rhymes, he being already the husband of one good lady (the daughter of the great earl protector Pembroke) he obligingly recommended her to his brother Henry III. for a queen.

That monarch, whose share of personal advantages was but small, and whose learning and imaginativeness far exceeded his wit and judgment, had been disappointed in no less than five attempts to enter the holy pale of matrimony, with as many different princesses. Henry would fain have espoused a princess of Scotland, whose eldest sister had married his great minister Hubert de Burgh;<sup>5</sup> but his nobles, from jealousy of Hubert, dissuaded him from this alliance.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nostrodamus, Hist. of Troubadours.

<sup>2</sup> Crescimbeni. Romeo is mentioned by Dante as one of the greatest Italian poets of his time; he was tutor to Eleanor and her sister Marguerite.

<sup>3</sup> Lives of the Troubadours, by Nostrodamus, who very stupidly mistakes Richard, earl of Cornwall, for his uncle Cœur de Lion; but Fauriel has, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, satisfactorily explained the blunder.

<sup>4</sup> The poem written by the princess Eleanor bears marks of its origin, being precisely the sort of composition that a child, or young girl of some genius and little literary experience might have composed. It was not without its popularity in her native country, where it is yet remembered. Probably the young Eleanor received some assistance from her mother and father, as the countess Beatrice and the count Berenger were both poets of great popularity in the Provençal dialect.—*Fauriel, Revue des Deux Mondes*.

<sup>5</sup> It was reported to king Henry, by Hubert's jealous foes, that he had dissuaded a lady from fulfilling her engagement with the king, by telling her "that Henry was a squint-eyed fool, a lewd man, a leper, deceitful, perjured, more faint-hearted than a woman, and utterly unfit for the company of any fair or noble lady" (Articles of impeachment, Speed.)

<sup>6</sup> Rapin.

Henry then vainly sued for a consort in the courts of Bretagne, Austria, and Bohemia; and at length, wholly dispirited by his want of success in every matrimonial negotiation into which he had entered, the royal Cœlebs, having arrived at the age of twenty-five, began, no doubt, to imagine himself devoted to a life of single blessedness, and remained four years without further attempts to provide himself with a queen.

In 1235, however, he again took courage, and offered his hand to Joanna, the daughter of the earl of Ponthieu; and having, for the first time in his life, received a favourable answer to his proposals, a contract of marriage with this lady was signed, and ambassadors despatched for the pope's dispensation; but when they were within a few days' journey of Rome, Henry sent word that he had altered his mind, and charged them not to proceed.<sup>1</sup>

This sudden change of purpose was occasioned by the agreeable impression Henry had received from his brother Richard, earl of Cornwall, of the beauty and brilliant genius of his fair correspondent, Eleanor of Provence.<sup>2</sup>

The treaty was privately opened in June 1235; and as soon as Henry thought proper to make known to his court, that he had broken his engagement with the maid of Ponthieu, his nobles, according to Hemmingsford, were so obliging as to recommend him to marry the very lady on whom he had secretly fixed his mind.

As Louis IX. of France (afterwards styled St. Louis) was married to Eleanor's eldest sister, the infanta Marguerite of Provence, Henry's counsellors were of opinion that great political advantages might be derived from this alliance.

Henry discreetly made choice of three sober priests, for his procurators at the court of count Berenger.<sup>3</sup> The bishops of Ely and Lincoln, and the prior of Hurtle; to these were added the master of the Temple. Though Henry's age more than doubled that of the fair maid of Provence, of whose charms and accomplishments he had received such favourable reports, and he was aware that the poverty of the generous count her father was almost proverbial, yet the king's constitutional covetousness impelled him to demand the enormous portion of twenty thousand marks, with this fairest flower of the land of roses and sweet song.

Count Berenger, in reply, objected on the part of his daughter, to the very inadequate dower Henry would be able to settle upon her during the life of his mother queen Isabella. Henry, on this, proceeded to lower his demands from one sum to another, till finding that the impoverished but high-spirited Provençal count was inclined to resent his sordid manner of bargaining for the nuptial portion,<sup>4</sup> and being seriously

<sup>1</sup> Matthew Paris. Matthew Westminster. Rapin.

<sup>2</sup> We find in Rymer's *Fœdera*, about this period, a letter written by Henry III. to the earl Savoy, brother to the countess Beatrice, Eleanor's mother, entreating his friendly assistance in bringing about the marriage. <sup>3</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*.

<sup>4</sup> In his private instructions to John, the son of Philip, his seneschal, and to his procurators, Henry by a postscript subjoins the following scale of progressive abatements, which he empowers his trusty and well-beloved to make, from his

alarmed lest he should lose the lady, he in a great fright wrote to his ambassadors, "to conclude the marriage forthwith, either with money or without, but at all events to secure the lady for him, and conduct her safely to England without delay."

The contract was then joyfully signed by count Berenger, and the infant *Eleanor* was delivered, with all due solemnity, to the ambassadors.

Henry, in the course of his matrimonial negotiations with the count of Provence, addressed two letters, one to the count, and the other to the countess of Provence, in which he requests them "to permit the nuptials of *Eleanor* to be postponed till the feast of St. Martin, and to explain to their daughter, that such was his wish."

*Eleanor* was dowered in the reversion of the queen-mother, *Isabella of Angoulême's* dower, whose settlement is recapitulated in the marriage treaty between Henry and his future consort; but no immediate settlement is specified for the young queen.

When the royal bride commenced her journey to England, she was attended on her progress by all the chivalry and beauty of the south of France, a stately train of nobles, ladies, minstrels, and jongleurs, with crowds of humbler followers. She was treated with peculiar honours by Thibaut, the poet-king of Navarre, who feasted the fair Provençal princess and her company for five days, and attended her in person, with all his knights and nobles, to the French frontier. There she was met and welcomed by her eldest sister, the consort of that most amiable and virtuous of kings, St. Louis; and, after receiving the congratulations of these illustrious relatives, she embarked for England, landed at Dover, and, on the 4th of January, 1236, was married to king Henry III. at Canterbury, by the archbishop, St. Edmund of Canterbury.\*

Piers of Langtoft gives us the following description of the royal bride:—

"Henry, our king, at Westminster took to wife  
The earl's daughter of Provence, the fairest May in life;  
Her name is Elinor, of gentle nurture;  
Beyond the sea there was no such creature."

All contemporary chronicles, indeed, whether in halting English rhymes, or sonorous Latin prose—to say nothing of the panegyrical strains of her countrymen, the Provençal poets—are agreed in representing this princess as well deserving the surname of "*La Belle*."

King Henry conducted his youthful consort to London in great pride, attended by a splendid train of nobility and ecclesiastics, who had accompanied the sovereign to Canterbury in order to assist at his nuptials. Preparations of the most extraordinary magnificence were made for the approaching coronation of the newly-wedded queen, which was appointed to take place on the feast of St. Fabian and St. Sebastian, six days only

first demand of 20,000 marks:—15,000—10,000—7,000—5,000—3,000 marcarum.  
—Rymer's *Fœdera*. It is by no means certain that even the paltry minimum here named by the royal calculator was obtained.

\* These letters are dated the 10th of October, 1235.

† M. Paris.



after the bridal, being the 20th of January. Previous to that august ceremony, Henry had caused great improvements to be made in the palace of Westminster, for the reception of his young consort.

There is a precept in the twentieth year of his reign, directing "that the king's great chamber at Westminster be painted a good green colour, like a curtain: that, in the great gable or frontispiece of the said chamber, a French inscription should be painted, and that the king's little wardrobe should also be painted of a green colour, to imitate a curtain." The queen's chamber was beautified and adorned with historical paintings at the same time.

The Saturday before the queen was crowned, Henry laid the first stone of the Lady Chapel, in Westminster Abbey. We read also that the good citizens of London, in their zealous desire of doing honour to their beautiful young queen, set about the scarcely less than Herculean labour of cleansing their streets from mud, and all other offensive accumulations, with which they were, at that season of the year, rendered almost impassable.

This laudable purification, which must have been regarded almost as a national blessing, being happily effected, the loyal citizens prepared all sorts of costly pageantry, before unheard of, to grace the coronation festival, and delight the young queen.

Eleanor was just at the happy age for enjoying the spectacle of all the gay succession of brave shows and dainty devices, so elegantly detailed by Matthew Paris, who, after describing streets hung with different coloured silks, garlands, and banners, and with lamps, cressets, and other lights at night, concludes by saying:—"But why need I recount the train of those who performed the offices of the church; why describe the profusion of dishes which furnished the table, the abundance of venison, the variety of fish, the diversity of wine, the gaiety of the jugglers, the comeliness of the attendants? Whatever the world could produce for glory or delight was there conspicuous."

But the most remarkable feature in the coronation of Eleanor of Provence must have been the equestrian procession of the citizens of London, who, on that occasion, claimed the office of cellarers to the king of England.

The claim of his loyal citizens having been wisely granted, they venturously mounted swift horses, and rode forth to accompany the king and queen from the Tower, clothed in long garments, embroidered with gold and silk of divers colours. They amounted to the number of three hundred and sixty. Their steeds were finely trapped in array, with shining bits and new saddles, each citizen bearing a gold or silver cup in his hand for the royal use, the king's trumpeters sounding before them; and so rode they in at the royal banquet, (better riders, belike, were they than the men who wear long gowns in the city of London in these degenerate days), and served the king and that noble company with wine, according to their duty.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matthew Paris. City Record. Speed. As cellarers they handed the wine to the royal butler.

The mayor of London, Andrew Buckerel, the pepperer, headed this splendid civic cavalcade, and claimed the place of Master Michael Belot, the deputy of Albini, earl of Arundel, the grand boteler or pincerna of England; but he was repulsed by order of the king, who said, "no one ought by right to perform that service but Master Michael." The mayor submitted to the royal decision in this matter of high ceremonial, and served the two bishops at the king's right hand.<sup>1</sup> After the banquet, the earl-boteler received the cup out of which the king had drunk as a matter of right; and Master Michael, his deputy, received the earl's robes. Gilbert de Sandford claimed, for the service of keeping the queen's chamber-door at this coronation, the queen's bed and all its furniture, as her chamberlain.<sup>2</sup>

Alms were bounteously distributed to the poor on this occasion, king Henry, with all his faults, being one of the most charitable of princes.

The most sumptuous and splendid garments ever seen in England were worn at the coronation of the young queen of Henry III. The peaceful and vigorous administration of Pembroke and Hubert de Burgh had filled England with wealth and luxury, drawn from their commerce with the south of France. The citizens of London wore at this splendid ceremony garments called cyclades, a sort of upper robe, made not only of silk, but of velvet worked with gold. Henry III., who was, like his father, the greatest fop in his dominions, did not, like king John, confine the orders of his wardrobe rolls to the adornment of his own person; but liberally issued benefactions of satin, velvet, cloth of gold, and ermine, for the appareling of his royal ladies. No homely dress of green cloth was ordered for the attire of his lovely queen; but when a mantle lined with ermine was made by his tailors for himself, another as rich was given out for Eleanor.

The elegant fashion of chaplets of gold and jewels, worn over the hair, was adopted by this queen, whose jewellery was of a magnificent order, and is supposed to have cost her doting husband nearly 30,000*l.*; an enormous sum if reckoned according to the value of our money. Eleanor had no less than nine guirlands, or chaplets,<sup>3</sup> for her hair, formed of gold filagree and clusters of coloured precious stones. For state occasions she had a great crown, most glorious with gems, worth 1500*l.* at that era; her girdles were worth 5000 marks; and the coronation present given by her sister, queen Marguerite of France, was a large silver peacock, whose train was set with sapphires and pearls, and other precious stones, wrought with silver. This elegant piece of jewelry was

<sup>1</sup> As the citizens of London had claimed the service of the butlery, so those of Winchester claimed that of the royal kitchen; but the doings of the men of Winchester, in the capacity of the cook's assistants, have not been recorded. The cloth that hung behind the king's table was claimed, on the one side, by the door-keepers, and, on the other, by the scullions, as their perquisite.

<sup>2</sup> Speed. City Records.

<sup>3</sup> See the elegant description of this kind of head-dress, in the lay of sir Launfel, written a few years after:

"Their heads were dight well withal,  
Each with a jolly coronal  
With sixty gems or mo."

used as a reservoir for sweet waters, which were forced out of its beak, into a basin of silver chased.

Henry did not forget his own apparel, when he endowed his queen so richly with jewels; he was noted as the first prince who wore the costly material called *baudekins*, and, arrayed in a garment of this brilliant tissue of gold, he sat upon his throne, and "glittered very gloriously,"<sup>1</sup> when his young and lovely queen shared his third coronation.

The expenses of Eleanor's coronation were enormous. So great was the outlay beyond the king's resources, that Henry expended the portion of his sister Isabella, just married to the emperor of Germany, for the purpose of defraying them.<sup>2</sup> When he petitioned the lords for a thirtieth of his subjects' property, as a relief from his difficulties, they told him "they had amply supplied funds both for his marriage, and that of the empress; and as he had wasted the money, he might defray the expenses of his wedding as he could."

Great offence, it seems, had already been taken by the nation at the number of foreigners, especially Italians, who had accompanied, or followed, queen Eleanor to England. Among these was her uncle, Peter of Savoy, one of the younger brothers of the countess of Provence. Henry created Peter earl of Richmond, and, at the suit of the queen, bestowed upon him that part of London since called the Savoy, from this prince. He paid the crown but the nominal quit-rent of three broad arrows. Peter founded there a noble palace, which the queen, his niece, afterwards purchased of him for her son Edmund, earl of Lancaster.<sup>3</sup>

In the course of one short year, the ascendancy which the uncle of his young queen gained over the plastic mind of Henry was so considerable, that the administration of the kingdom was entirely left to his discretion, and all the patronage of church and state passed through his hands.

Richard, earl of Cornwall, at that time the heir presumptive to the throne, though greatly attached to the king his brother, reprobated Henry's conduct in permitting the intrusion and interference of the queen's foreign relatives and attendants; bidding his brother "follow the prudent example of their brother-in-law, the emperor, who, when he received their sister, the princess Isabella, sent back all her train of followers." The king of France, too, he reminded Henry, had taken the same course, when he married the elder sister of queen Eleanor.<sup>4</sup>

In the fourth year of her marriage Eleanor brought an heir to England. The young prince was born on the 16th of June, 1239, at West-

<sup>1</sup> Mathew Paris.

<sup>2</sup> Henry had indeed fitted his sister out with a sumptuous wardrobe, the details of which he had personally superintended, with a degree of minute attention to linings, trimmings, purflings, and garniture, perfectly surprising in a male sovereign, but quite in accordance with the general frivolity of this monarch's character, and his taste for finery. He also favoured the officers of the wardrobe with a particular inventory of the dresses of the princess, and a description of the material and fashion of each, even to the *robe de chambre*; and having, by the extra-pains for his sister's outward adornment, we suppose, satisfied his conscience, he appropriated the rest of her portion to his own use. (*Rapin. Strutt's British Costume.*)

<sup>3</sup> Pennant's London.

<sup>4</sup> M. Paris.

minster, and received the popular name of Edward, in honour of Edward the Confessor; for whose memory Henry III. cherished the deepest veneration.

The celebrated earl of Leicester,<sup>1</sup> was one of the godfathers of prince Edward, and held him at the baptismal font: he was then in the height of favour both with Eleanor and the king. But the scene changed before the queen left her lying-in chamber; for when she gave a grand festival on occasion of her churching,<sup>2</sup> and the king summoned all the great ladies of the land to attend the queen to church, Leicester brought his newly wedded wife, the king's sister, to perform her devoir to Eleanor, but was received with a burst of fury by Henry, who called him "the seducer of his sister, and an excommunicated man, and ordered his attendants to turn him out of the palace." Leicester endeavoured to remonstrate, but Henry would not hear him, and he was expelled, weeping with rage, and vowing vengeance against the young queen, to whose influence he attributed this reverse.

Independently of his noble taste in architecture, of which Westminster Abbey is a standing proof, Henry III. was undoubtedly possessed of a love for the fine arts; for we find, in the seventeenth year of his reign, a precept directed to the sheriff of Hampshire, commanding him to cause the king's wainscoted chamber, in the castle of Winchester, to be painted with Saxon histories, and the same pictures with which it had been painted before; which proves, not only that historical paintings in oil on wainscot were then in use, but that they had been painted so long that the colours were faded, and required renewing.

Again, we have a precept of Henry III., twenty-three years after this period, which runs thus:—"Pay out of our treasury to Odo the goldsmith, and Edward his son, one hundred and seventeen shillings and tenpence, for oil, varnish, and colours bought, and pictures made in the chamber of our queen, at Westminster, between the octaves of Holy Trinity, and the feast of St. Barnabas, the same year, in the twenty-third year of our reign."<sup>3</sup>

Among many other proofs of attention paid by Henry to his young queen on the birth of his heir, we find that he ordered "the chamber behind her chapel, in his palace of Westminster, and the private chamber of that apartment, supposed to be Eleanor's dressing-room, to be freshly wainscoted and lined, and that a list or border should be made, well painted, with images of our Lord and angels, with incense-pots scattered over the list or border." He also directed that the four evan-

<sup>1</sup> Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, the third son of Simon, count de Montfort, the sanguinary leader of the crusade against the Albigenses. He had served the office of seneschal, or high steward of the royal household, at the coronation of the queen: and this year Henry, with his own hand, secretly bestowed upon him his widowed sister, Eleanor, countess of Pembroke, in St. Stephen's chapel, though the princess had vowed to become a nun. There were circumstances, it should seem, that rendered a hasty marriage necessary; and an enormous bribe from Henry purchased a dispensation for this marriage from the pope, the lady having taken the ring, but not the veil of a nun.—Matthew Paris. Speed. Rapin.

<sup>2</sup> Sandford's Genealogies.

<sup>3</sup> Walpole's Anecdotes of Painting. Strutt.

gelists should be painted in the queen's chamber, and that a crystal vase should be made for keeping the relics he possessed.

A few curious particulars, illustrative of the interior of the ancient palace of our English kings at Woodstock, may be gathered from the following minute instructions, contained in a precept<sup>1</sup> addressed by Henry III., in the 25th of his reign, to the keeper of that palace, directing him "to cause an extension of the iron trellises on the steps leading from our chamber to the *herbarium*, or garden;<sup>2</sup> also of the wooden lattices in two windows of our queen's chamber, and to cause a pent to be made over these windows, covered with lead, and an aperture to be made in the pent, between the hall, and our queen's chamber, and the chapel towards the borders of our herbarium, and two windows of white glass looking towards the said borders. Two spikes, also, in the gable of our hall, and windows of the same kind on the east of the hall, and the pictures now in the hall are to be repaired. And we desire that all the courts, fountains, and walls of our houses there be repaired."

This reign affords the first example of a poet-laureate, in the person of one Master Henry, to whom, by the appellation of "our beloved versificator,"<sup>3</sup> the king orders "one hundred shillings to be given in payment of his arrears." This officer was in all probability introduced into the royal household by the Provençal queen, who was, as we have seen, herself a poet, and who had been accustomed in her early youth to be surrounded by minstrels and troubadours, in the literary court of her accomplished parents.

Henry III. was also a patron of literature, and a great lover of Provençal poetry. Fauriel points out several romances written under the superintendence of this king, who, when he married Eleanor of Provence, received a partner whose tastes and pursuits certainly assimilated with his own; and to this circumstance may, no doubt, be attributed the unbounded influence which she acquired over his mind, which she retained long after the bloom of youth and beauty had passed away.

While the king and queen were still residing at the palace of Woodstock, about three months after the birth of their heir, an attempt was made on the life of the king by a mad poet named Ribald, or Ribaut, who, according to some of the chroniclers, was a gentleman and a knight.<sup>4</sup> One day he rushed into the royal presence, and, before the whole court, called upon Henry to resign the crown, which he had usurped and so long detained from him. The officers of the household

<sup>1</sup> Rot. Liberati, 25th Henry III., m. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Gardening was by no means neglected in the reign of this prince; for Matthew Paris mentions "that the inclement year 1257 was a year of famine; that apples were scarce, and pears scarce; but that figs and cherries, plums, and all kinds of fruit included in shells, had totally failed." Several of these fruits are afterwards named in our annals, as lately introduced in the reign of Henry VIII.; but there is not a doubt that the civilization of England had greatly retrograded from the time of the Provençal queens. During the barbarous wars, from the reign of Henry V. to Richard III., England had lost many arts, even horticulture,—for the fruits re-introduced in the reign of Henry VIII. were undoubtedly cultivated in that of Henry III.

<sup>3</sup> Madox, History Exchequer.

<sup>4</sup> Speed. M. Paris.

forced him out of the presence-chamber, and would have inflicted a severe chastisement upon him, if the kind-hearted monarch had not interposed, and charged them "not to hurt a man who talked so like a person out of his senses." The king told them "to take him into his hall, and entertain him hospitably, and let him go." This was done, and Ribaut got into high spirits, and began to be very amusing to the royal retinue, jocolating for their entertainment, and singing some choice minstrelsy.<sup>1</sup> Thus he whiled away the time till dark, when he stole into the king's bed-chamber through a window, armed with a long sharp knife, and concealed himself among the rushes under the king's bed.

Henry, fortunately for himself, passed that night in the queen's chamber, and Ribald, rising up at midnight, stabbed the bolster of the royal bed several times, searching for the king in vain, and demanding where he was, in a loud roaring voice, which so alarmed Margaret Bisset, one of the queen's maids of honour, who was sitting up late reading a devout book by the light of a lamp, that her shrieks awakened the king's servants, who took him into custody. The unhappy creature was executed at Coventry for this offence.<sup>2</sup>

The following year two other uncles of the queen, Thomas, count of Savoy, and Boniface, his younger brother, visited England;<sup>3</sup> and Henry, out of complaisance to his consort, received and entertained them with such magnificence, that, not knowing how to support the charge by honest means, he sent word to the Jews, that unless they presented him with twenty thousand marks, he would expel them all the kingdom; and thus he supplied himself with money for his unjust generosity.

The death of St. Edmund, archbishop of Canterbury, furnished Henry with a further opportunity of obliging Eleanor, by obtaining the nomination of her uncle Boniface to the primacy of England.

Matthew of Westminster, as well as Paris, informs us that Eleanor wrote, with her own hand, a very elegant epistle to the pope in his behalf; "taking upon herself," says the worthy chronicler, (who appears to have been highly scandalized at female interference in ecclesiastical affairs,) "for no other reason than his relationship to her, to urge the cause of this unsuitable candidate in the warmest manner; and so," continues he, "my lord the pope, when he had read the letter, thought proper to name this man, who had been chosen by a woman; and it was commonly said that he was chosen by female intrigue."

Among other proofs of Eleanor's unbounded influence over the mind of her lord, it was observed, that when, on the death of Gilbert Marshal, earl of Pembroke, his brother Walter demanded of the king the office of Earl Marshal, which was hereditary in his family, Henry at first, in a great passion, denied him, telling him, "that his two brothers were a pair of turbulent traitors, and that he had presumed to attend a

<sup>1</sup> Wikea.

<sup>2</sup> In these days he would have been with more propriety consigned to an asylum for lunatics. The expression of "ribald rhymes" was, no doubt, derived from the name of this frantic versifier of the thirteenth century.

<sup>3</sup> M. Paris. Polydore Vergil. Speed.

tournament at which he had forbidden him to be present." Yet, when the earl, having succeeded in interesting queen Eleanor in his favour, again preferred his suit, it was immediately granted through her powerful intercession.<sup>1</sup>

Queen Eleanor presented her royal husband with a daughter in the year 1241, who was named Margaret, after the elder sister of Eleanor, the queen of France. The following year, the queen accompanied the king her husband on his ill-advised expedition against her brother-in-law, the king of France,<sup>2</sup> with whom that peace-loving monarch had suffered himself to be involved in a quarrel, to oblige his mother, Isabella of Angoulême.<sup>3</sup> The king and queen embarked at Portsmouth, May 19, 1242. Henry was totally unsuccessful in his attacks on the king of France, and, after a series of defeats,<sup>4</sup> took refuge with his queen at Bourdeaux, to the great scandal of all his English knights and nobles, many of whom forsook their sovereign, and returned home, which Henry revenged in the usual way, by fining their estates.

Eleanor gave birth to another daughter at Bourdeaux, whom she named Beatrice, after her mother, the countess of Provence.<sup>5</sup>

In consequence of the close connexion between their queens, Louis IX. was induced to grant a truce of five years to his vanquished foe. Henry and Eleanor then resolved to spend a merry winter at Bourdeaux, where they amused themselves with as much feasting and pageantry as if Henry had obtained the most splendid victories, although he was much impoverished by losing his military chest, and his moveable chapel-royal, with all its rich plate, at the battle of Taillebourg. When Henry and Eleanor returned to England, they landed at Portsmouth, and orders were issued that the principal inhabitants of every town on the route to London should testify their loyal affection, by coming forth on horseback in their best array, to meet and welcome their sovereign and his queen.<sup>6</sup>

During the residence of the royal family on the continent, queen Eleanor strengthened her interest by bringing about a union between her youngest sister Cincia, or Sancha, and the king's brother, Richard, earl of Cornwall, who had recently become a widower. The marriage was solemnized in England, whither the countess of Provence conducted the affianced bride in the autumn of the same year. Henry called upon the Jews to furnish the funds for the splendid festivities, which he thought proper to ordain in honour of the nuptials between his brother, and the sister of his queen. One Jew alone, the rich Aaron of York, was compelled to pay no less than four hundred marks of gold, and four thousand of silver; and the Jews of London were mulcted in like proportion. The charge Henry was at, on account of this marriage, may be estimated by the wedding-dinner alone, which consisted of thirty thousand dishes. "The king," say the chroniclers of that day, "thought he never could do enough to testify his love for the queen and her family."<sup>7</sup>

The countess of Provence, not contented with the splendour of her

<sup>1</sup> M. Paris.

<sup>2</sup> M. Westminster. Rapin.

<sup>3</sup> See the preceding biography.

<sup>4</sup> M. Paris. Rapin.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Speed.

<sup>7</sup> M. Paris.

entertainment, thought proper, before she departed, to borrow four thousand marks of the king for the use of her husband.

The misconduct of Eleanor's uncles, and their unfitness for the high and responsible situation, in which they were placed in England, may be gathered from the following disgraceful fracas, which took place between the archbishop Boniface and the monks of St. Bartholomew. In the year 1244, Boniface, archbishop of Canterbury, thought proper to intrude himself in the bishop of London's diocese, on a visitation to the priory of St. Bartholomew. The monks, though they liked not his coming, received him with respect, and came out in solemn procession to meet him; but the archbishop said "he came not to receive honour, but for the purposes of ecclesiastical visitation." On this, the monks replied, "that having a learned bishop of their own, they ought not to be visited by any other." This answer was so much resented by the wrathful primate that he smote the sub-prior on the face, exclaiming in his ungoverned fury, "Indeed, indeed, doth it become ye English traitors thus to withstand me?" and, with oaths not proper to repeat, he tore the rich cope of the sub-prior to pieces, and trampled it under his feet, and thrust him against a pillar of the chancel with such violence that he had well-nigh slain him. The monks seeing their sub-prior thus maltreated, pushed the archbishop back, and in so doing discovered that he was encased in armour, and prepared for battle. The archbishop's attendants, who were all Provençals to a man, then fell on the monks, whom they beat, buffeted, and trampled under foot. The monks, in their rent and miry garments, ran to show their wounds and to complain of their wrongs to their bishop, who bade them go, and tell the king thereof. The only four who were capable of getting as far as Westminster, proceeded to the palace in a doleful plight; but the king would neither see them nor receive their complaint.<sup>1</sup> The populace of London were, however, in great indignation, and were disposed to tear the archbishop to pieces, pursuing him all the way to Lambeth with execrations, crying aloud, "Where is this ruffian, this cruel smiter? He is no winner of souls, but an exacter of money—a stranger born, unlearned, and unlawfully elected." Boniface fled over to the palace, where he made his story good with the king, through the influence of the queen, his niece; and the monks of St. Bartholomew got no redress.

About this time, Henry, it is said, ordered all the poor children, from the streets and highways round Windsor and its neighbourhood, to be collected, and munificently feasted in the great hall of the palace there. Afterwards the royal children were all publicly weighed, and their weight in silver distributed in alms among the destitute individuals present, for the good of the souls of the princely progeny of himself and queen Eleanor.

The following year, 1244, the threatened war, between England and Scotland, was averted by a contract of marriage; in which the hand of the eldest daughter of Henry and Eleanor, the infant lady Margaret, was pledged to the heir of Scotland, the eldest son of Alexander II.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> M. Westminster.

<sup>2</sup> M. Paris. M. Westminster.



In the beginning of the year 1245, the queen was delivered of her second son, prince Edmund. The parliament having, in the preceding November, refused an aid to the king, he levied a fine of fifteen hundred marks on the city of London, under pretence that they had sheltered one Walter Bukerel, whom he had banished. Henry was encouraged in his unconstitutional proceedings, by a very trivial circumstance. A fire broke out in the pope's palace, and destroyed the chamber in which the principal deed of Magna Charta was kept, which made the queen fancy that it was rendered null and void.<sup>1</sup>

England was at this period in such a state of misrule, that in Hampshire no jury dared to find a bill against any plunderer; nor was the system of universal pillage confined to the weak and undefended, since Matthew Paris declares "king Henry complained to him, that when he was travelling with the queen through that county, their luggage was robbed, their wine drunk, and themselves insulted by the lawless rabble."

Such was the insurgent state of Hampshire, that king Henry could find no judge or justiciary, who would undertake to see the laws duly executed. In this dilemma, he was forced to sit on the bench of justice himself in Winchester Castle; and no doubt the causes determined by him would have been well worth the attention of modern reporters. While thus presiding personally on the King's Bench, Henry had occasion to summon lord Clifford to answer at this justice-seat for some malefaction; when the turbulent misdoer not only contumaciously refused his attendance, but forced the king's officer to eat the royal warrant, seal and all!<sup>2</sup> Henry punished him with spirit and courage.

One great cause of the queen's unpopularity in London, originated from the unprincipled manner in which she exercised her influence to compel all vessels freighted with corn, wool, or any peculiarly valuable cargo, to unlade their cargoes at her hithe, or quay, called Queenhithe; because at that port (the dues of which formed a part of the revenues of the queen-consorts of England,) the tolls were paid according to the value of the lading.<sup>3</sup> This arbitrary mode of proceeding was without parallel on the part of her predecessors, and was considered as a serious grievance, by the masters of vessels, and merchants in general.<sup>4</sup> At last Eleanor, for a certain sum of money, sold her rights in this quay to her brother-in-law, Richard, earl of Cornwall, who, for a quit-rent of fifty pounds per annum, let it as a fee-farm to John Gisors, the mayor of London, for the sake of putting an end to the perpetual disputes, between the merchants of London and the queen.<sup>5</sup>

In order to annoy the citizens of London, Henry, during the disputes regarding the queen's gold, revived the old Saxon custom of convening folkmotes, and by this means reminded the commons, as the great body of his subjects were called, that they had a political existence no less than the barons of England,—and they never again forgot it.

<sup>1</sup> M. Paris.

<sup>2</sup> Regal Annals, quoted by Speed.

<sup>3</sup> Harrison's Survey of London.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Harrison's Survey of London. This work marks the important incident of the folkmotes, which were used by the king to excite turbulence in the city, against the magistrates who had offended.

Modern writers have asserted that there was no middle class, in the days of the Plantagenets—what, then, may we ask, were the citizens of London, those munificent and high-spirited merchants, whose wealth so often in this reign excited the cupidity of the court? If the conduct of the king and queen, towards this class of their subjects, had been guided by a more enlightened policy, they might have found in their loyal affection no trivial support against Leicester, and the disaffected aristocracy of England; but, excited by the rapacity of Eleanor, the king pillaged and outraged the citizens, till they threw their weight into the scale of the mighty adversary of the monarchy.

Queen Eleanor was somewhat relieved from her pecuniary difficulties by the death of the queen-mother, Isabella, in 1246. She was put, after this event, in full possession of the dower lands appointed for the English queens; she however appropriated her replenished purse to the use of her mother, who, now a widow, paid another visit to England, to the great indignation of Henry. The king was discontented at the manner in which count Berenger had disposed of Provence, to the exclusion of his eldest daughters. He was, besides, very little able to afford gifts to his wife's mother, since he had not at that very time wherewithal to meet his household expenses. He was advised, as the parliament refused to assist him with more money, to raise the sum required to satisfy his clamorous creditors, by selling his plate and jewels. "But where shall I find purchasers, if money be so scarce?" demanded the king. "In the city of London," was the reply. On this, Henry petulantly observed, "If the treasures of Augustus Cæsar were in the market, the city of London would purchase them, I suppose. Those clownish citizens, who call themselves barons, are an inexhaustible treasury in themselves."<sup>1</sup>

With the determination of participating in some of this envied wealth, Henry and Eleanor thought proper to keep the Christmas of 1248 in the city of London, and extorted presents from the most liberal of the leading men there, to the amount of upwards of two thousand marks.<sup>2</sup> This was, however, far from satisfying the royal visitors. Henry complained that he had not been treated with sufficient respect, and to testify his displeasure, proclaimed a fair in Tothill-fields, for the benefit of the men of Westminster, which was to last a fortnight; and during that period he forbade the citizens of London to open their shops for any sort of traffic, to the great injury of trade.<sup>3</sup>

In Henry's thirty-fourth year, occurs his order to the master of the Temple, "that he deliver to Henry of the Wardrobe, for two years' use, a certain great book, which is at his house in London, written in French, containing the acts of the king of Antioch, and of other kings." It had been compiled and illuminated, under the care of Henry himself, and if it was, as supposed, relating to the crusading Provençal princes of Antioch, it would be a valuable history.<sup>4</sup>

The extreme straits to which the king and queen were, at times, reduced for the money they profusely lavished, may be gathered from

<sup>1</sup> M. Paris. Speed.

<sup>2</sup> Survey of London.

<sup>3</sup> Stowe.

<sup>4</sup> Close Rolls, quoted by Brayley. Hist. Palace of Westminster.

the fact, that in the twenty-seventh year of his reign, Henry, being without the means of paying the officers of the chapel royal at Windsor, issued an order to John Mansel, directing him "to pawn the most valuable image of the Virgin Mary for the sum required, but under especial condition that this hallowed pledge be deposited in a decent place."<sup>1</sup>

In the year 1249, the royal coffers being entirely exhausted, and the parliament refusing to grant any aid, Henry proceeded to practise the degrading expedient of soliciting loans and gifts of every person of condition who entered his presence, assuring them "that it would be a greater act of charity to bestow money on him, than on those who went from door to door begging an alms."<sup>2</sup>

The king and queen were next seized with an unwonted fit of economy, and not only forbore to make expensive grants and donations, but put all their servants on short allowance, abridged their wages, and refused to disburse any of the gratuities which the kings and queens of England had been accustomed to bestow. They ceased to put on their royal robes,<sup>3</sup> and, to save the expense of keeping a table, they daily invited themselves, with their son, prince Edward, and a chosen number of their foreign kindred, or favourites, to dine with the rich men of the city of London, or the great men of the court, and manifested much discontent unless presented with costly gifts at their departure, which they took, not as obligations and proofs of loyal affection to their persons, but as matters of right.

The cry of the land, in that reign, was against foreign influence and foreign oppression; and it was a proverb, that no one but a Provençal or a Poictevin had any hopes of advancement, either in the state or church; and which were held in the greatest abhorrence, the half-brothers of the king, or the uncles of the queen, it was difficult to say.<sup>4</sup>

On St. Dunstan's day, 1251, queen Eleanor's apartments in Windsor Castle were struck by lightning, and the chimney of the room, where she and the royal children were, was thrown down by the violence of

<sup>1</sup> Madox.

<sup>2</sup> M. Paris.

<sup>3</sup> Speed.

<sup>4</sup> A foreign historian declares that the language of the English was in this reign as barbarous as their manners. To add to other disquiets, there was a regular confusion of tongues, as in England no man rightly understood his neighbour. It was a mark of nobility and gentle breeding for people to converse in Norman-French, or in Provençal: and many affected these languages who knew them not. All the queen's court spoke Provençal; the law acknowledged no language but Norman-French; the church nothing but Latin; the people a corrupted Saxon; therefore, in addition to her other misfortunes, poor England had to endure the plagues of the Tower of Babel. "Some use," says a contemporary writer, "strange gibbering, chattering, waffling, and grating; then the Northumbres tongue (and especially at York) is so sharp, flitting, froying, and unshape, that we Southron men may not understand that language."—*Trevisa*. Here we see the different elements out of which rose our English language, in an actual state of struggle and ferment. The long alliance with Provence certainly threw into the composition of the rising language, its share of harmony and elegance, and the long reign of Eleanor of Provence, and her constant communication with her own country, aided this transfusion. It is a curious circumstance, that the proclamations, in order to preserve the king's peace, or at least to make the endeavour, had to be read in three languages—Saxon, French, and Latin.

the shock, and reduced to dust.<sup>1</sup> In the parks many oaks were rent asunder and uprooted; mills with their millers, sheepfolds with their shepherds, and husbandmen in the fields, were, by the same awful storm, beaten to the earth and destroyed.

The year, however, closed, more auspiciously than it commenced, with the espousals of the princess Margaret, the eldest daughter of Henry and Eleanor, then in her tenth year, to the young king of Scotland, Alexander III., who was about twelve. The nuptials were celebrated with great pomp at York, where the royal families of England and Scotland kept their Christmas together.

The youthful bridegroom was knighted by king Henry, in York cathedral, on Christmas-day, in the presence of the whole court, and the next morning the marriage was solemnized at an early hour. Henry endeavoured to persuade the young Alexander to pay him homage for the realm of Scotland; but the princely boy excused himself with good address from the performance of this important ceremony,<sup>2</sup> by replying "that he came to York to be married, not to discuss an affair on which he, being a minor, could determine nothing, without consulting the states of his kingdom." Henry, finding his son-in-law was of so determined a spirit, could not find it in his heart to break up the nuptial festivities by insisting on his demand, especially as the archbishop of York had generously promised to be at the expense of all the entertainment, which cost him upwards of four thousand marks, "and six hundred oxen, which," says Matthew Paris, "were all consumed at one meal."<sup>3</sup>

More worthy of remembrance, however, than these enormous devourings of the hospitable archbishop's beef, does the worthy chronicler consider the dignified and princely conduct of the youthful majesty of Scotland, at his bridal feast, and the amiable manner in which he supplicated, on his knees, with clasped hands, to his royal father-in-law, for the pardon of Philip Lovel, one of his ministers, who lay under the king's heavy displeasure at that time. The royal bride joined in the petition, kneeling with her newly-wedded lord at her father's feet, and hanging on his garments. Henry was so moved by the artless earnestness of their supplications, as to be only able to articulate one word, "Willingly," and all who sat at the feast melted into tears of tenderness and admiration. The object for whom these interesting pleaders used such powerful intercessions was an unworthy peculator, convicted of receiving bribes in the discharge of his office; nevertheless, the misjudging sovereign was persuaded, by the engaging prattle of two inexperienced children, to invest him with the tempting office of treasurer. No doubt the royal supplicants had received their cue from the queen, or some person who possessed the means of influencing them, to make an appeal in favour of Lovel, for it is very improbable that at their tender age they would have thought of him at such a time.

The extravagance of dress at these nuptials, has been noted by many writers. Matthew Paris declares the nobility were arrayed in vests of silk called *cointoises*, or *quintises*; and the day after the nuptial cere-

<sup>1</sup> Stowe.<sup>2</sup> Chronicles of Mailros.<sup>3</sup> Matthew Paris. Speed.

mony, the queen of England and her ladies laid these new robes aside, and appeared clad in others still more costly, and of a new pattern. The robes *quintises*, thus named to express their fanciful quaintness, were upper, or supertunics, with no sleeves, or very short ones, bordered with vandyking, or scolloping, worked and notched in various patterns, scarfs were worn by knights, *à la quintise*, meaning that they were ornamented with a notched border. The *quintise* robe was worn by queen Eleanor so long before and behind, as to trail on the ground, and was held up with one hand, lest her steps should be impeded. The Roman de la Rose, speaking of these garments first worn by Eleanor and her court, counsels the ladies, if their feet and ancles be not small and delicate, to let their robes fall on the pavement and hide them, whilst those whose feet are of a beautiful form, may hold up the robe in front, for the convenience of stepping along briskly. He uncivilly compares the ladies to pies and peacocks, which, he says, "delight in feathers of various colours; so do our court ladies. The pies have long tails that train in the dirt, but the ladies make their tails a thousand times longer than the peacocks and the pies."

Ladies' head-dresses were singularly elegant, in the youth and middle age of this beautiful queen. The hair was gathered up under a golden network, over which was thrown the veil, or coverchef. Those women who ventured to walk in the street with only the caul, garland, and bandeaus, without the sheltering veil or coverchef, were deemed improper characters, and liable to insult. The unmarried females wore their hair flowing in ringlets on the shoulders, or, if their tresses were very long and luxuriant, braided in two tails, and tied with ribbons, or a knot of gems, at the ends. The veil, surmounted with a bandeau, was assumed when they rode or walked in the open air. The queen is sometimes represented with the homely gorget or wimple, in illuminations of that time. The gorget fashion imitated, in cambric or lawn, the knight's helmet, with an aperture, cut like the vizor, for the face to peep through; and very lovely that face must have been which did not look ugly through so hideous an envelop.

The felicity which the king and queen enjoyed, in the magnificent celebration of their daughter's union with the Scottish king, was interrupted by the return of Henry's discarded favourite, Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, who had passed six years in a sort of honourable banishment, as governor of Gascony. Deputies had been sent from that province with complaints of Leicester's tyrannical conduct, and he, having succeeded in refuting the charges of his Gascon foes, proceeded to call upon the king to reward him for his services, reminding him of his royal promise to that effect. Henry, with infinite scorn, replied, that "he did not consider himself obliged to keep his word with a traitor." Leicester fiercely told the sovereign "he lied, and were he not his king he would make him eat his words;" adding, "that it was scarcely possible to believe he was a Christian, or ever had made confession of his sins." "Yes," replied the king, "I am a Christian, and have often been at confession." "What signifies confession," retorted the earl, "without repentance?" "I never repented of anything so much in my life,"

rejoined the insulted monarch, "as having bestowed favours on one who has so little gratitude and such ill manners." After this characteristic dialogue, there was nothing but hatred between the king and his insolent brother-in-law.

To add to the troubles of the king and queen at this juncture, even so late as the year 1252, the validity of his marriage with Eleanor was perpetually agitated at the court of Rome, owing to the king's capricious breach of promise with the countess of Ponthieu;<sup>1</sup> and this year he was forced to obtain bulls at a great expense from pope Innocent, declaring the contract of the king of England with Joanna (who had been long married to the king of Castille) null and void, and his marriage with Eleanor of Provence good matrimony. In a little time we shall see the heir of Henry, and the young daughter of Joanna enter into wedlock.

Henry's temper now became so irascible, that he quarrelled with his best friends; he was more extortionate than ever, and demanded of the clergy a tenth of their revenues, towards the expenses of a projected crusade. He sent for the bishop of Ely, who appeared to have great influence with his brethren, and endeavoured by flattering caresses to secure his interest; but when that conscientious prelate attempted to reason with him on the folly of his conduct, Henry angrily retorted, "that he did not require any of his counsels," and ordered his officers "to turn him out of doors for an ill-bred fellow as he was."<sup>2</sup>

Louis IX. of France, and the gallant retinue of noble crusaders, by whom he had been attended on his ill-starred expedition to Palestine, were at this time languishing in the most doleful captivity, and the flower of the French chivalry had fallen victims, either to the pestilence, or the sword. The luxurious Eleanor of Provence talked of accompanying her feeble-minded lord in a crusade for their aid, but it was not probable that she would abandon her painted chambers and jewelled pomp, to expose herself to the peril of hardships and privations, like those which her sister was suffering at Damietta.

The queen was this year, again, in imminent danger from a thunder storm; she was, with her children, visiting the abbey of St. Alban's, when lightning struck the chimney of her chamber and shivered it to pieces. The abbey-laundrey burst into flames; while such a commotion was raised by the elements, that the king's chief justice, (who was escorting two treasure-carts, and had accepted hospitality at the abbey,) thinking the whole structure was devoted to destruction, rushed forth into the highway, with two friars, and as they went, they fancied a flaming torch, or a drawn sword, preceded them.<sup>3</sup>

The same summer Henry made preparations for going in person, to quell the formidable revolt in Guienne, occasioned by the recall of the earl of Leicester, and the misgovernment of prince Edward, who had been appointed as his successor in the fourteenth year of his age.

Queen Eleanor, being near her confinement, did not accompany the king, but was solemnly invested by her departing lord with the regency

<sup>1</sup> Fœdera, vol. i.

<sup>2</sup> M. Paris.

<sup>3</sup> Hist. of the Abbey of St. Alban's.

of the kingdom, jointly with his brother Richard, earl of Cornwall, the husband of her sister Sancha of Provence. While Henry was waiting in the neighbourhood of Portsmouth for a favourable wind, he made his will, which is a very interesting document, affording proof of his affection for his queen, and the unbounded confidence which he reposed in her.

#### HENRY THE THIRD'S WILL.<sup>1</sup>

"I, Henry king of England, duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, and earl of Anjou, on the Tuesday after St. Peter and St. Paul, in the year of grace 1253, at Southwick,<sup>2</sup> proposing to go to Gascony, I make my will in the form following:—I will that my body be buried in the church of the blessed Edward of Westminster, there being no impediment—having formerly appointed my body to be buried in the New Temple of London. I commit the guardianship of Edward, my eldest son and heir, and of my other children, and of my kingdom of England, and all my other lands in Wales, and Ireland, and Gascony, to my illustrious queen Eleanor, until they arrive at full age. Also, I bequeath the cross which the countess of Kent gave me, to the small altar of the aforesaid church of Westminster."

Though he lived many years after, Henry never made another will.

King Henry, attended by the greater number of his barons, sailed from Portsmouth, August 6th: he arrived at Bourdeaux on the 15th of the same month, and took the command of his army in person.

On the 25th of November, Eleanor gave birth to a daughter, in London, who was christened with great pomp by the archbishop of Canterbury, the queen's uncle. That primate also stood godfather for the infant princess, and bestowed upon her the name of Katharine, because she was born on St. Katharine's day. She died very young, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, by her two brothers, Richard and John, the third and fourth sons of Henry and Eleanor, who had preceded her to the tomb. These royal children repose in the space between the chapels of St. Edward and St. Bennet.<sup>3</sup>

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## ELEANOR OF PROVENCE,

SURNAMED LA BELLE.

QUEEN OF HENRY III.

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### CHAPTER II.

Eleanor's regency—Great seal of England left in her hands—Unlawful exactions—Disputes with city of London—Assemblies of parliament—Her new year's gift to the king—Goes to Guienne—Her son's nuptials—Feast of kings—Lands in England—Vengeance on the Londoners—Eleanor attends the king to the north—Her sickness at Wark castle—Court at Woodstock—Death of princess

<sup>1</sup> Nicolas's *Testamenta Vetusta*.

<sup>2</sup> A convent near Portsmouth.

<sup>3</sup> Speed.

Katharine—Folly of the king—Queen's unpopular conduct—Garrisons Windsor—Prince Edward robs the Templars—Queen pledges jewels—Pelted from London Bridge—Takes sanctuary—Goes to France with the king—Civil war—King and prince taken at Lewes—Queen raises forces on the continent—Battle of Evesham—Londoners fined—Her return to England—Prince Edward's crusade—Household expenses of the queen—Death of Henry III.—Eleanor's widowhood—Refounds St. Katharine's hospital—Death of Eleanor's daughters—Royal letters—Queen retires to Ambresbury—Miracle by Henry III.—Eleanor takes the veil—Visited by king Edward—His dutiful respect—Her death—Petition of Jewish converts.

WHEN Henry III. appointed Eleanor regent of England, he left the great seal in her custody, but enclosed in its casket, sealed with the impression of his own privy seal, and with the signets of his brother, Richard earl of Cornwall, and others of his council. It was only to be opened on occasions of extreme urgency.

Eleanor was directed to govern by the advice of her royal brother-in-law, but the regal power was vested in her; and we find that pleas were holden before her, and the king's council, in the Court of Exchequer, during Henry's absence in Gascony. "At this time," says Madox,<sup>1</sup> "the queen was *custos regni* and sat *vice regis*."<sup>2</sup> We have thus an instance of a queen-consort performing not only the functions of a sovereign, in the absence of the monarch, but acting as a judge in the highest court of judicature, *curia regis*. There can be no doubt but this princess took her seat on the King's Bench.<sup>3</sup>

No sooner had queen Eleanor got the reins of empire in her own hands, unrestrained by the counterbalancing power of the great earl of Leicester, who had volunteered his services to king Henry against the insurgent Gascons, than she proceeded to play the sovereign in a more despotic manner, in one instance at least, than had ever been attempted by the mightiest monarch of the Norman line. Remembering her former disputes with the city of London, she now took the opportunity of gratifying her revenge and covetousness at the same time, by demanding of their magistrates the payment of a large sum, which she insisted they owed her for *aurum reginæ*, or queen-gold—a due which the queens of England were entitled to claim on every tenth mark paid to the king, as voluntary fines for the royal good-will, in the renewals of leases on crown lands, or the granting of charters. Eleanor, in this instance, most unreasonably demanded her queen-gold on various enormous fines, that had been unrighteously and vexatiously extorted by the king, from the plundered merchants and citizens of London. For the non-payment of this unjust claim, Eleanor, in a very summary manner, committed the sheriffs of London, Richard Picard and John de Northampton, to the Marshalsea prison, in the year 1254;<sup>4</sup> and the same year

<sup>1</sup> Madox. History of Exchequer, chap. ii. p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> History of the Exchequer. Judicature of the king's court.

<sup>3</sup> *Placita coram domina regina et consilio domina regis in crastino nativitatibus Mariæ anno 37, Hen. IX. Ex sigula rotulor. anni illius menes Thes. et camerar. Rot. 1. 4.*

<sup>4</sup> Stow. Harrison.



she again committed them, together with Richard Hardell, draper, the mayor, to the same prison, for arrears of an aid, towards the war in Gascony.

These arbitrary proceedings of the queen-regent were regarded with indignant astonishment by a city governed by laws peculiar to itself—London being, in fact, a republic within a monarchy, whose privileges had hitherto been respected by the most despotic sovereigns. It had been hoped that Richard, earl of Cornwall, Eleanor's coadjutor in the delegated regal power, would have restrained her from such reckless use—or rather we should say abuse—of the authority, with which she had been invested by her absent lord; but since his marriage with her sister, that prince had ceased to oppose the queen in any of her designs. Thus the queen and the countess of Cornwall made common cause, contriving to govern between them the king and his brother, and, through them, the whole realm, according to their own pleasure, whether it were for good or evil.

In the beginning of the year, Eleanor received instructions from the king to summon a parliament, for the purpose of demanding an aid for carrying on the war in Gascony. But finding it impossible to obtain this grant, queen Eleanor sent the king five hundred marks from her own private coffers, as a new year's gift, for the immediate relief of his more pressing exigencies.<sup>1</sup> Henry then directed his brother to extort from the luckless Jews the sum required, for the nuptial festivities of his heir. As soon as Henry received the glittering fruits of this iniquity, he sent for Eleanor, to assist him in squandering it away, in the light and vain expenses, in which they mutually delighted, and to grace with her presence the bridal of their eldest son, prince Edward.<sup>2</sup> Eleanor, who loved power well, but pleasure better, on this welcome summons, resigned the cares of government to the earl of Cornwall, and, with her sister, the countess of Cornwall, her second son, prince Edmund, and a courtly retinue of ladies, knights, and nobles, sailed from Portsmouth on the 15th of May, and, landing at Bordeaux, was joyfully welcomed by her husband, and their heir, prince Edward, whom she had not seen for upwards of a year. She then crossed the Pyrenees with her son, and having assisted at the solemnization of his nuptials with the infanta Eleanora of Castille, returned with the royal bride and bridegroom to king Henry, who was waiting for their arrival at Bordeaux. Instead of sailing from thence to England, the queen persuaded Henry to accept the invitation of St. Louis, her brother-in-law, to pass some days at his court with their train.

At Chartres, Eleanor enjoyed the pleasure of embracing her sister, the queen of France, who, with king Louis and their nobles, there met and welcomed their royal guests, and conducted them with all due pomp to Paris.<sup>3</sup> Here Louis assigned the palace of the Old Temple, for the residence of his royal guests; a domicile that could almost furnish accommodations for an army. The morning after their arrival, Henry distributed very abundant alms among the Parisian poor, and made a splendid

<sup>1</sup> Stow's Annals.

<sup>2</sup> M. Paris.

<sup>3</sup> M. Paris. M. Westminster.

entertainment for the relatives of his queen, which was, in memory of its magnificence, and the number of crowned heads present, called the Feast of Kings.<sup>1</sup> Contemporary chroniclers record that neither Ahasuerus, Arthur, nor Charlemagne, ever equalled this feast, in any of their far-famed doings. King Henry sat at table on the right hand of the king of France, and the king of Navarre on the left. King Louis, with the princely courtesy and meekness which so much characterized the royal saint of France, contended much that the king of England should take the place of honour; but Henry refused to do so, alleging that the king of France was his suzerain, in allusion to the lands which he held of him as a vassal peer of France; on which Louis, in acknowledgment of the compliment, softly rejoined, "Would to God that every one had his rights without offence."<sup>2</sup>

At this memorable entertainment, queen Eleanor enjoyed the happiness of a reunion with her four sisters, and their children, and her mother, the countess of Provence. After the royal family of England had received, during a sojourn of eight days in Paris, all the honour, which the power of the king, and the wealth of the fair realm of France could bestow, they took their leave of these pleasant scenes. The king and court of France accompanied them one day's journey.

Eleanor and her husband landed at Dover on the fifth of January, 1255, and on the 27th made their public entry into London with extraordinary pomp. They received a present of a hundred pounds sterling, which the citizens of London were accustomed to give on such occasions; but as Henry did not seem satisfied, they added a rich piece of plate of exquisite workmanship, which pleased, but certainly did not content, this most acquisitive of all our monarchs; since, a few days after, he extorted a fine of three thousand marks from them, on the frivolous pretence of the escape of a priest from Newgate, who was accused of murder. It was very evident to the citizens, that Eleanor had not forgotten their resistance of her illegal exactions; for much strife ensued regarding her claims.<sup>3</sup>

Eleanor, who was probably ambitious of being the mother of as many crowned heads, as those, by whom she had seen the countess of Provence proudly surrounded at the feast of kings, was much elated at the pope sending her second son, prince Edmund, then about ten years old,

<sup>1</sup> M. Paris.

<sup>2</sup> M. Paris. The king of France alluded to the detention of Normandy and Anjou, the inheritance of the House of Plantagenet.

<sup>3</sup> In addition to this imposition, Henry forced the Londoners to pay fourpence a day for the maintenance of a white bear which he kept in the Tower of London, having six years previously commanded the sheriffs of London to provide a muzzle, and iron chain, and a cord, for the use of the said royal pet, while fishing in the river Thames. Henry appears to have had a mighty predilection for wild beasts. The menagerie at the Tower was formed in his reign, commencing with three leopards, which his brother-in-law, the emperor, presented to him. Then he had an elephant, which was so highly prized by him, that on its decease he issued a writ to the constable of the Tower, "to deliver the bones of the elephant lately buried in the Tower ditch to the sacristan of Westminster, to make thereof what he had enjoined him to do."

a ring, whereby he professed to invest him with the kingdom of Sicily. But the delight of king Henry at the imaginary preferment of his favourite son exceeded all bounds. He caused a seal to be made, with the effigies of the young prince enthroned, bearing the sceptre and orb of sovereignty, and crowned with the royal diadem of Sicily; <sup>1</sup> he next prepared to rush madly into an expensive and unpopular war, for the purpose of establishing the chimerical claims of the boy to this shadowy dignity. Henry was only deterred from pursuing his design by rumours of an alarming nature, touching the king and queen of Scots; queen Eleanor having been informed that they were deprived of royal power, and kept in close confinement by the regents, Sir John Baliol and the Comyns, who were the next heirs to the Scottish crown. The maternal anxiety of the queen being very painfully excited by these reports, she privately despatched her physician, a person in whose sagacity she could confide, into Scotland, to ascertain the real situation of her daughter. This trusty agent ascertained that the king and queen of Scots were both imprisoned in the castle of Edinburgh, but in separate apartments; and having succeeded in gaining a secret interview with the young queen, she gave him a lamentable account of her treatment ever since her marriage; "having been rudely torn," she said, "from her royal husband, and kept apart from him in a doleful damp place, the bad air of which had seriously injured her health; and, so far from having any share in the government, they were treated with the utmost contumely, and were in daily peril of their lives."

While the fate of the young king and queen of Scotland was in suspense, the maternal anxiety of Eleanor was of the most poignant nature. She accompanied her royal lord on a northern campaign, which he undertook on this occasion, constantly urging him to exert himself for the benefit of his child. Before the earl of Gloucester, whom he had sent to the aid of the young queen, could forward news of his mission into England, Eleanor's trouble of mind brought on a violent illness, and she was confined to her bed at Wark Castle,<sup>2</sup> with small hopes of her life.<sup>3</sup> At last tidings came, that Gloucester and Mansel had gained admittance into the castle of Edinburgh, by assuming the dress of tenants

<sup>1</sup> Speed.

<sup>2</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*.

<sup>3</sup> There is among the Tower records a letter from Henry, dated from Wark, September 13th, evidently written while he was yet in suspense as to the result of this affair, enjoining "his dear son Edward of Westminster, and his treasurer, Philip Lovel, by the love and faith they owe him, to keep the feasts of his favourite saint, Edward the Confessor, with all due pomp, the same as if himself were present; and to make an offering in gold for himself, for the queen and the royal children; also that they cause to be touched the silver cross on the great altar at Westminster, and offer a plate of gold weighing one ounce, the same as was customary to be done when the king was present at the mass of St. Edward; and that they cause to come solemnly to Westminster, on St. Edward's day, the procession of the church of St. Margaret, and all the processions of the city of London, with wax-lights, as the king hath commanded the mayor and the honest men of London." Henry concludes with commanding both halls of the palace at Westminster to be filled with poor men and women, to be fed at his expense.

of Baliol the governor, and, in this disguise, they were enabled to give secret access to their followers, by whom the garrison was surprised, and the rescued king and queen restored to each other. Their cruel gaolers, Baliol and Ross, were brought to king Henry at Alnwick to answer for their treasons; on their throwing themselves at his feet and imploring for mercy, he forgave them; but as Baliol was his own subject he mulcted him in a heavy fine, which he reserved for his own private use. He then sent for the young king and queen of Scotland, to join him at Alnwick, where the king of Scotland solemnly chose him to be his guardian during the rest of his minority.

Queen Eleanor's illness continued to detain her at Wark Castle, even after her mind was relieved of the anxiety which had caused her sickness. Her indisposition, and extreme desire of her daughter's company, are certified in a letter of king Henry to his son-in-law, the king of Scotland, dated the 20th of September, 1255,<sup>1</sup> in which he specifies, "that the queen of Scotland is to remain with the sick queen, her mother, his beloved consort, at Wark Castle, till the said queen is sufficiently recovered to be capable of travelling southward."

On Eleanor's convalescence, the king and queen of Scotland accompanied her and king Henry to Woodstock, where she kept her court with more than ordinary splendour, to celebrate their deliverance from their late adversity. There were then three kings and three queens at Woodstock, with their retinues.<sup>2</sup> Richard, earl of Cornwall, having obtained his election as successor to the emperor of Germany, had assumed the title of king of the Romans, while his consort, queen Eleanor's sister, took also royal state and title.

After exhausting all the pleasures that the sylvan palace of Woodstock, its extensive chase and pleasance, could afford, they proceeded to London, where, in the month of February, the three kings and queens made their public entry, wearing their crowns and royal robes.<sup>3</sup>

All this pomp and festivity was succeeded by a season of gloom and care. The departure of the king and queen of Scotland was followed by that of the new king and queen of the Romans, who went to be crowned at Aix-la-Chapelle, carrying with them seven hundred thousand pounds in sterling money. A dreadful famine was added to the public embarrassment, occasioned by the drain on the specie.

It was at this season of public misery that Eleanor, blinded by the selfish spirit of covetousness to the impolicy of her conduct, chose to renew her demands of queen-gold on the city of London. These the king enforced by writs of exchequer, himself sitting there in person,<sup>4</sup> and compelling the reluctant sheriffs to distrain the citizens for the same.

This year the queen lost her little daughter, the princess Katharine, whom she had borne to king Henry during his absence in the Gascon war. The king caused a most sumptuous monument to be erected for her in Westminster Abbey. There is among the Tower records an order to his treasurer and chamberlains of the treasury, to deliver to

<sup>1</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew Paris.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew Paris. M. Westminster.

<sup>4</sup> Stow's London.

Master Simon de Wills five marks and a half for his expenses in bringing from London a certain brass image to be set on the royal infant's tomb; and for paying to Simon de Gloucester, the king's goldsmith, for a silver image for the like purpose, the sum of seventy marks.

The ardent desire of the king and queen for the realization of their second son's title as king of Sicily meeting with no encouragement, a little piece of stage effect was devised by the sovereign, by which he foolishly imagined he should move his obdurate barons to grant the pecuniary supplies for his darling project. Having caused the young prince to be attired in the graceful costume of a Sicilian king, he, at the opening of the parliament, presented him to the assembly with the following speech:—"Behold here, good people, my son Edmund, whom God of his gracious goodness hath called to the excellency of kingly dignity; how comely and well worthy he is of all your favour, and how cruel and tyrannical must they be, who, at this pinch, would deny him effectual and seasonable help, both with money and advice!"<sup>1</sup>

Of the latter, truth to tell, the barons were in no wise sparing, since they urged the king not to waste the blood and treasure of his suffering people on such a hopeless chimera; but Henry, who was as firm in folly as he was unstable in well-doing, pertinaciously returned to the charge, notwithstanding the strange insensibility manifested by the peers to the comeliness of the young prince, and the picturesque beauty of his Sicilian dress, for which the royal sire, in the fond weakness of paternal vanity, had condescended to bespeak the admiration of the stern assembly. The aid was finally obtained through the interference of the pope's legate, but on condition that the sovereign should consider himself bound by the Oxford statutes. The object of those statutes was to reduce the power of the crown to a mere nominal authority.

One day, as the sovereign was proceeding by water to the Tower, he was overtaken by a tremendous thunder-storm, and in great alarm bade the boatman push for the first stairs, forgetting, in his fright, that they belonged to Durham-house, where Leicester then dwelt. The earl, with unwelcome courtesy, came to receive his royal brother-in-law as he landed from the boat, telling him, at the same time, "not to be alarmed, as the storm was spent." "I am beyond measure afraid of thunder and lightning, but by the head of God I fear thee more than all the thunder in the world," replied Henry, with as fierce a look as he could assume.<sup>2</sup> To which Leicester mildly rejoined, "My lord, you are to blame to fear your only true and firm friend, whose sole desire it is to preserve England from ruin, and yourself from the destruction which your false counsellors are preparing for you."

Henry, far from confiding in these professions, took the earliest opportunity of leaving the kingdom, to seek assistance from the foreign connexions of his queen. In his absence, the king and queen of Scots arrived at Windsor Castle, on a visit to queen Eleanor. A few days after Henry's return, John, duke of Bretagne, came over to wed the princess Beatrice. The earl of Leicester allowed the king and queen ample supplies for the entertainment of these illustrious guests.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> M. Paris.<sup>2</sup> Ibid..<sup>3</sup> T. Wikes. Rapin.

The court at Windsor had never been more numerous attended, or more magnificently appointed, than on this occasion; but there was a pervading gloom on the mind of the royal parents, which the presence of their eldest daughter, and the marriage of their second, failed to dissipate. The young queen of Scotland passed the whole winter with her mother at Windsor Castle, where she lay in of a daughter.

The state of Henry's mind at the period preceding the barons' war may be gathered from his issuing directions to his painter, Master Williams, a monk of Westminster, to paint a picture for him, of a king rescued by his dogs, from an attack made upon him by his subjects. Philip Lovel, the king's treasurer, is ordered by this precept, which was issued in the fortieth year of Henry's reign, to disburse, to the said Master Williams, the full charges and expenses of executing this picture; which is ordered to be placed in the wardrobe of Westminster, where the king was accustomed to wash his head.

At this period, the king and queen chiefly confined themselves within one or other of the royal fortresses of Windsor, or the Tower, both of which were strengthened, and prepared with additional defences, to stand a siege. After Henry had violated the provisions of Oxford, he took up his residence in the Tower of London, while Eleanor remained with a strong garrison to keep Windsor. The principal communication between these fortified palaces was by water.

In 1261 died the queen's sister, Sancha countess of Cornwall and queen of the Romans, for whom the king and queen made great lamentations, and gave her a magnificent funeral.

In that year the royal party gained such strength, that the earl of Leicester found it most prudent to withdraw to the continent. Prince Edward returned to England, to guard the realm while king Henry went to Gascony, where his presence was required, and where he fell sick of a quartan ague, which detained him there during the autumn.

While prince Edward was carrying on the war against the Welch, Leicester's cause became more formidable, and in 1262 that mighty agitator returned almost at the same time with the king, to whom he caused the barons to present an address, requiring him to confirm the Oxford statutes, adding a defiance to all who opposed them, the king, the queen, and the royal children excepted. This exception may be regarded, all things considered, as a very remarkable piece of civility on the part of the reforming barons of the 13th century. One of the most influential of these was Roger Bigod, earl of Norfolk and Suffolk, to whom in angry parlance king Henry said, "What, sir earl, are you so bold with me, whose vassal peer you are? Could I not issue my royal warrant for threshing out all your corn?" "Ay," retorted the earl, "and could I not in return send you the heads of the threshers?"<sup>1</sup>

Bold men would they have been who had ventured to undertake that office. A striking instance of the disregard of all moral restraints, among the high and mighty, in that reign of misery, may be seen in the lawless robbery, committed by the heir apparent of the realm, on the

<sup>1</sup> M. Paris.

treasury of the Knights Templars, in the year 1263. Those military monks were not only the masters of great wealth, but acted as bankers and money-brokers to all Europe, lending sums on rich pledges at usurious interest. Queen Eleanor, at the commencement of the troubles in which her reckless counsels had involved the king, had deposited her jewels, for security, with this fraternity, who had advanced a sum of money upon them. On the return of prince Edward from his victorious campaign in Wales, finding himself without the means of disbursing the arrears of pay which he owed his troops, and unwilling to disband men whom he foresaw his father's cause would require, marched straightway to the Temple, and told the master that it was his pleasure to see the jewels of the queen his mother, as he understood they were not safely kept. On this excuse he entered the treasury, and broke open the coffers of many persons who had lodged their money, and pledges for security, in the hands of the Templars, and seized ten thousand pounds sterling, principally belonging to the citizens of London, which, together with the queen's jewels, he carried off to the royal fortress of Windsor.<sup>1</sup>

A few months afterwards the queen pawned these jewels a second time to her sister's husband, the king of France; that monarch probably regarding the robbery of the Templars as a very small sin.<sup>2</sup>

The active part taken by queen Eleanor and her eldest son, in the mismanagement of the king's affairs, at this critical period, is recorded by Matthew Paris, who is certainly a credible witness, and one who had every means of information on the subject, since, from the great respect in which his talents were held by king Henry, he was invited to dine at the royal table every day, and, as he himself states, frequently wrote in the presence, and from the dictation, of the king. Neither Henry nor Eleanor were probably aware how oft that sly monk took notes of their foolish sayings and evil doings, for the example of distant generations; enriching his chronicle, moreover, with many a choice anecdote, illustrative of the personal history of royalty, in the thirteenth century.

Robert of Gloucester, a contemporary, thus notices the proceedings of the queen, and prince Edward's political opinions.

"The queen went beyond the sea, the king's brethren also;  
And ever they strove the charter to undo;  
They purchased that the pope should assoil, I wis,  
Of the oath, and the charter, and the king, and all his.

It was ever the queen's thought (as much as *she* could think)  
To break the charter by some woman's wrenche;<sup>3</sup>  
And though sir Edward proved a hardy knight and good,  
Yet this same charter was little to his mood."

<sup>1</sup> Chronicle of Dunmow. Annals of St. Augustine. Rapin. Harrison's Survey of London, &c. &c.

<sup>2</sup> For Louis had permitted his attached friend and follower, the lord de Joinville, who triumphantly records the fact in his chronicle of the crusade, to break open the treasure-chests of this wealthy fraternity of the church militant at Demietta, with a sledge-hammer, and take from thence the sum required to make up his ransom. Joinville's Chronicle, *Vie de St. Louis*.

<sup>3</sup> Pronounced *wrenk*, meaning twisting or wrenching the words of Magna Charta from their clear and simple signification.

Many indeed were the wiles and evasions, very inconsistent with the stern and soldier-like plainness of his character in after life, which were practised by the valiant heir of England, while acting under the influence of his insincere mother, in the hope of circumventing the barons by fraud, if not by force.

In this year, notwithstanding the reluctance of the queen,<sup>1</sup> king Henry was induced to sign an amicable arrangement with the barons, by which he bound himself to confirm the provisions of Oxford. This agreement, which might have averted the storm of civil strife, was regarded with fierce impatience, by some of the destructives of the thirteenth century, who, eager for plunder and athirst for blood, finding they were likely to be disappointed in the object which had led them to rank themselves on the side of the reforming barons and their great dictator, Montfort, raised a dreadful uproar in London against the unhappy Jews, whose wealth excited their envy and cupidity.

T. Wikes, a contemporary chronicler, thus details the particulars of this tumult, which was the prelude to a personal attack upon the queen. At the sound of St. Paul's great bell, a numerous mob sallied forth, led on by Stephen Buckrell, the marshal of London, and John Fitz-John, a powerful baron. They killed and plundered many of these wretched people without mercy. The ferocious leader, John Fitz-John, ran through with his sword, in cold blood, Kokben Abraham, the wealthiest Hebrew resident in London. Besides plundering and killing five hundred of this devoted race, the mob turned the rest out of their beds, undressed as they were, keeping them so the whole night. The next morning they commenced the work of plunder with such outrageous yells, that the queen, who was then at the Tower, seized with mortal terror, got into her barge with many of her great ladies, the wives and daughters of the noblest, intending to escape by water to Windsor Castle. But the raging populace, to whom she had rendered herself most obnoxious, as soon as they observed the royal barge on the river, made a general rush to the bridge, crying—"Drown the witch!—drown the witch!"<sup>2</sup> at the same time pelting the queen with mud, addressing the most abusive language to her, and endeavouring to sink the vessel by hurling down blocks of wood and stone of an enormous weight, which they tore from the unfinished buildings of the bridge. The poor ladies were pelted with rotten eggs, and sheep's bones, and everything vile.<sup>3</sup> If the queen had persisted in shooting the arch, the boat must have been swamped, or her vessel dashed to pieces, by the formidable missiles that were aimed at her person. As it was, she with difficulty escaped the fury of the assailants by returning to the Tower. Not considering herself safe there, she took sanctuary at night in the bishop of London's palace at St. Paul's, whence she was privately removed to Windsor Castle, where prince Edward kept garrison with his troops. This high-spirited prince never forgave the Londoners for the insult they had offered to his mother.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>M. Westminster. <sup>2</sup>Matthew of Westminster. Wikes. Speed. Rapin. <sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Matthew of Westminster, in his *Flowers of History*, details this outrage with some spirit, in the Latin of the cloister.



Though Eleanor had been a most unprincipled plunderer of the Jews, whenever opportunity served, she was accused of patronising them, because great numbers of them had flocked into England at the time of her marriage with king Henry, the Provençal princes having always granted toleration to this people. Eleanor never forgot her terror at London bridge, which had the effect of hurrying forward the civil war. At the time when the barons had agreed to refer their grievances to the arbitration of St. Louis, the brother-in-law of the queen, king Henry took Eleanor with him to France, and left her there in October, 1264, with her children, at the court of her sister Marguerite.

The decision of St. Louis, though really a rational one, did not satisfy the barons, who protested against it on the grounds of family partiality, and England was forthwith involved in the flames of civil war. After Henry had placed his adored queen in security, and taken a tender leave of her and her young children, he returned to England to encounter the storm, with more spirit and manliness than was usual to his character. On Passion Sunday, Henry gained a great victory at Northampton over the barons; he took his rebellious nephew, the earl of Leicester's eldest son, prisoner, together with fourteen of the leading barons.<sup>1</sup> Henry used his victory with great moderation.<sup>2</sup> At the castle of Tunbridge, the fair countess of Gloucester, the wife of one of the most inveterate of his foes, fell into his hands, but he generously set her at liberty, with the courteous remark, "that he did not war on ladies."

So well, indeed, had the royal cause prospered in the commencement of the struggle, that when the rival armies were encamped within six miles of each other, near Lewes, the barons sent word to the king, that they would give him thirty thousand marks if he would consent to a pacification. Prince Edward, who was burning to avenge the insults which had been offered to the queen his mother, dissuaded Henry from accepting these terms, and the battle of Lewes followed.

"The king and his meinie were in the priorie,  
When Simon came to field and raised his bannere;  
He shewed forth his shield, his dragon full austere:  
The king said on high, 'Simon, je vous defie!'"

The battle of Lewes was lost through the reckless fury, with which the fiery heir of England pursued the flying Londoners, in order to avenge their incivility in pelting his mother at their bridge. He followed them with his cavalry, shouting the name of queen Eleanor, as far as

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<sup>1</sup> In this action, the insurgent students of Oxford, fifteen thousand in number, who fought under the banner of the university, against the crown, were the most formidable of Henry's assailants. When victory declared in his favour, the king would have inflicted a severe vengeance on them, had he not been deterred by his counsellors, who in a great fright reminded him, "that these bellicose students were the sons and kindred of the nobles, and magnates of the land, many of them the heirs of his own adherents withal, who had been carried away by the evil example of their companions, or excited by the misdirected ardour of youthful enthusiasm, to swell the ranks of the popular party against him; and if he slew them, their blood would be terribly revenged on him and his, even by those nobles who fought in his cause."

<sup>2</sup> Speed.

Croydon, where he made a merciless slaughter of the hapless citizens. When he returned to the field of battle with his jaded cavalry, he found his father, who had lost the support of all the horse, taken prisoner with his uncle the king of the Romans, and Edward had no other resource than surrendering himself to Leicester, who conveyed him, with king Henry, as captive to the castle of Wallingford.

The remnant of the royal army retreated to Bristol Castle, under the command of seven knights, who reared seven banners on the walls. The queen was said by some to be safe in France, but old Robert of Gloucester asserts that she was *espy*<sup>1</sup> in the land for the purpose of liberating her brave son. Let this be as it may, she sent word to Sir Warren de Basingbourne, her son's favourite knight, one of the gallant defenders of Bristol, that Wallingford was but feebly guarded, and that her son might be released, if he and the rest of the Bristol garrison would attack it by surprise. Directly Sir Warren received the queen's message, he, with three hundred horse, crossed the country, and arrived at Wallingford on a Friday, just as the sun rose, and, right against All Hallows church, made the first fierce attack on the castle, and won the outermost wall. The besieged defended themselves furiously, with cross-bows and battle engines: at last they called out to sir Warren, that "if they wanted *sire* Edward, the prince, they should have him, but bound hand and foot, and shot from the mangonel"—a terrific war engine used for casting stones. As soon as the prince heard of this murderous intention, he demanded leave to speak with his friends, and coming on the wall, assured them, "that if they persevered in his mother's intentions he should be destroyed." Whereupon sir Warren and his chevaliers retired in great dejection. Simon de Montfort, pretending to be angry for the violence offered to the prince his nephew, carried off all his royal prisoners for safe keeping to Kenilworth Castle, where Edward's aunt, his countess, was abiding, and who offered her royal brothers and their sons "all the solace she could."

The queen, thus disappointed in the liberation of her gallant heir, soon after found a partisan, in a lady strongly attached to her. This was lady Maud Mortimer. Lord Roger Mortimer had, much against the wishes of his lady, given his powerful aid to Leicester; but having received some affront since the victory of Lewes, he now turned a complacent ear to the loyal pleadings of Lady Maud, in behalf of the queen and her son. What all the valour of sir Warren failed to accomplish, the wit of woman effected. Lady Maud Mortimer having sent her instructions to prince Edward, he made his escape by riding races with his attendants till he had tired their horses, when he rode up to a thicket, where dame Maud had ambushed a swift steed. Mounting his gallant courser, Edward turned to his guard, and bade them "commend him to his sire the king, and tell him he would soon be at liberty," and then galloped off; while an armed party appeared on the opposite hill, a mile distant, and displayed the banner of Mortimer.

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<sup>1</sup> Concealed.

"Why should halt a long tale? He off scaped so,  
 To the castle of Wigmore the way soon he took,  
 There was joy and bliss enow when he came thither,  
 To the lady of that castle, dame Maud de Mortimer."

During the captivity of her husband and son, it is asserted that Eleanor of Provence made more than one private visit to England. Ostensibly, she resided in France, with her younger children, under the kind protection of her sister, queen Marguerite. Meantime, she had, directly after the disastrous field of Lewes, borrowed all the money she could raise on her jewels and credit, and proceeded to muster forces, and equip a fleet. Matthew of Westminster does full justice to the energetic efforts of "this noble virago," as he styles queen Eleanor, for the liberation of her husband. "She succeeded," he says, "in getting together a great army, commanded by so many dukes and earls as seemed incredible;" and those who knew the strength and power of that army affirmed, "that if they had once landed in England, they would presently have subdued the whole population of the country; but God in his mercy," continues the chronicler, "ordered it otherwise;" for while the queen and her foreign troops remained wind-bound on the other side of the water, the battle of Evesham was fought and won, by her valiant son, prince Edward. Leicester had the audacity to proclaim that prince and all his loyal chivalry traitors to the captive sovereign, for whose deliverance they had displayed their banners.

There are letters in the *Fœdera*, written during Henry's captivity, addressed by him "to queen Eleanor abiding in foreign parts," in which he assures her of his health and comfort, and continued affection for her and their children, and of his good hopes of a happy peace being soon established (through the blessing of God) in his dominions. These letters are, however, evidently written under the restraint and dictation of the earl of Leicester, since the captive monarch desires, nay, commands, the queen to "abstain from any attempts to alter the state of things, and charges her to exhort his heir not to interfere in any way against his will, which will be further explained by master Edward de Carol, the deacon of Wells, who is the bearer of these missives." They are dated Windsor, 18th of November, 1264.<sup>1</sup>

Eleanor, of course, paid no regard to the forced mandates of her unfortunate consort, but, like a faithful helpmate in the time of trouble, exerted all the energies of her nature for his deliverance. Possessing the pen of a ready writer, she addressed the most persuasive letters to Urban IV. and his legates, setting forth the zeal and obedience her husband had ever shown to the church;<sup>2</sup> she obtained bulls in favour of her party, which were of great service to the royal cause.

The battle of Evesham was won by a *coup de main*. Leicester mistook prince Edward's army for that of his own son, Simon de Montfort, which the prince had intercepted and dispersed. When Leicester discovered his error, he was struck with consternation, and exclaimed aloud, "May the Lord have mercy on our souls, for our bodies are the

<sup>1</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew of Westminster.

prince's?" Leicester exposed his royal prisoner, and former benefactor, king Henry, to the shafts of his own friends, by placing him in the front of the battle. Poor Henry was wounded with a javelin, in the shoulder, and was in imminent danger of being slain by one of the royalist soldiers, who, mistaking him for one of Leicester's party, would have cut him down, had he not cried out, in a lamentable voice, "Slay me not, I am Henry of Winchester, your king." An officer, hearing this, ran to his assistance, rescued him from his perilous situation, and brought him to prince Edward, who, greeting him with the tenderest affection, knelt and implored his blessing; and then, leaving a strong guard for his protection, pursued his victorious career.<sup>1</sup>

This battle was fought on the 4th of August, 1265, fourteen months after the defeat and capture of the king at Lewes. Though great provocation had been given to the king, and every member of the royal family, there was not a single drop of blood shed on the scaffold after this decisive triumph. Henry, with all his faults and follies, was tender of human life, and mindful that the noblest prerogative of the crown is mercy. Neither is it recorded of queen Eleanor, that she ever caused a sanguinary vengeance to be inflicted on any of her foes. King Henry, however, made the Londoners pay pretty dearly for the pelting they had bestowed on the high and mighty lady, his companion.<sup>2</sup> At length he granted a charter of remission for their sins to his consort, in these words :—

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<sup>1</sup> Robert of Gloucester, in strains of rugged strength, bewails the death of Leicester, and describes the singular darkness which overshadowed the fatal plain of Evesham, "while England's barons fought a field."

"Such was the murther of Evesham, for battle none it was."

He proceeds to say, that the victory was much displeasing to the Saviour, who sent a token of his anger by a darkness over the middle earth, such as befel when he died on the rood. For,

"The while the good men at Evesham were slew,  
In the north-west a dark weather arose,  
Suddenly swart enow that many men *egros*, (terrified)  
And overcast all through the land, that me might scarcely see,  
Grislier weather than it was might not on earth be;  
Few drops of rain fell, but they were large enow,  
Tokening well through the land when these men were slew,  
For thirty mile then. This I say, (Robert  
That first this book made,) and I was sore afraid."

<sup>2</sup> He divested the city of its ancient charters, caused its posts and chains to be taken away, and ordered the mayor, with a party of the principal citizens, to attend him at Windsor, to confirm the instrument of their own degradation, by affixing the seal of the city to a written form of their submission to the royal mercy. When they arrived at Windsor, they were treated with the utmost contumely by the officers of the royal household, and committed to the custody of the constable of the castle, who shut them up in the keep till the following day, when, as a great favour, they were bestowed in less alarming lodgings, except the mayor, and four of the most obnoxious to the royal cause, who were delivered to prince Edward, and by him subjected to a rigorous confinement till they had paid ransom for their own persons, and consented to petition the king to name a sum as the price of reconciliation with the city of London. Henry, not

"Know ye, that in consideration of twenty thousand marks, paid to us by our citizens of London, as an atonement for their great crimes and misdemeanours against us, our royal consort, our royal brother, Richard king of the Romans, and our dear son Edward, that we have, and do, by these our presents, remit, forgive, acquit," &c. &c. &c.

This enormous fine was not paid into the king's exchequer, every farthing of it being devoted to queen Eleanor's use, and, by her desire, it was transmitted to certain persons in France, who had supplied her with money at her need, during her exile from England.<sup>1</sup>

As for Henry, he had a rich harvest of fines and confiscations, granted by his obliging parliament, from the lands of the rebel barons. The "disinherited," as they were called, who were thus stripped of their patrimony, having nothing more to lose than their lives, raised a fresh revolt, under the banner of Simon de Montfort, Leicester's ruined heir, who was also king Henry's nephew.

The consequences of this rebellion were happily averted by the arrival of the queen, who landed at Dover, October 29th, 1266, bringing with her the pope's legate, cardinal Ottobone, whom she had induced to visit England, for the purpose of hurling the anathema of the church against the rebel barons. Ottobone accordingly convened a synod, and solemnly excommunicated all the adherents of the late earl of Leicester, whether living or dead, which had a wonderful effect in suppressing the insurrection.

The discontented annalists of the era mention this event, by saying that the queen returned with the legate, and that "together they made a great cursing."

Thus did Eleanor see the happy termination of the barons' wars, and was once more settled with her royal partner on the throne of England.

In the year 1267, the formidable revolt of the earl of Gloucester occurred. Fortunately for the queen, she was at Windsor when his partisans stormed her palace at Westminster, which they sacked, breaking and destroying everything they could not carry away, even to the doors and windows, and making a great slaughter of the royal domestics, who offered some slight resistance. They also did great mischief to the beautiful new-built abbey. Four of these banditti being discovered to be the servants of the earl of Derby, were, by that nobleman's orders, tied up in sacks, and thrown into the Thames.<sup>2</sup>

It was at this juncture that prince Edward personally encountered the last adherent of Leicester, and overcame him. The queen afterwards proved the benefactress of the gallant outlaw, Adam de Gordon, who was not a Scot, but a Poictevin. We translate, from the Latin of

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being a prince to whom *carte blanche* terms could be offered with impunity, demanded the enormous fine of sixty thousand marks. But the luckless citizens pleaded so movingly the impossibility of raising so unreasonable a sum, without involving in utter ruin many families who had been guiltless of all offence against him and the queen, that he was at length induced to moderate his demands to twenty thousand marks.—*Harrison's Survey*.

<sup>1</sup> Annals of London. T. Wikes.

<sup>2</sup> Stow.

Hemingford and Wikes, this adventure, so creditable both to Eleanor and her son.

“Edward engaged the brave outlaw, Adam de Gordon, in Alton wood hand to hand, and fairly conquered him in a personal encounter. After granting him his life, he brought him to his wife’s palace of Guildford, where his mother happened to be that evening, and introducing him to the queen, pleaded so earnestly for him, that Henry III. pardoned this adherent of Leicester, and Eleanor soon after gave Gordon an office at Windsor Castle.”

St. Edward’s Chapel being now completed, and forming the crowning glory of that sublime *chef d’œuvre* of Gothic architecture, St. Peter’s Abbey at Westminster, which Henry III. had been fifty years in building, he, on the 13th of October, St. Edward’s day, 1269, assisted by his brother, the king of the Romans, and his princely sons, Edward and Edmund, bore the bier of the royal saint on his shoulders; and, in the presence of his queen and all the nobles of his court, placed it in its new station, queen Eleanor offering a silver image of the Virgin, and other jewels of great value, at the shrine. King Henry reserved the old coffin of St. Edward for his own private use; having, with his usual simplicity, an idea that its previous occupation by the royal saint had made it a peculiarly desirable tenement.

Fortunately for the future peace of England, Boniface, archbishop of Canterbury, the chief cause of queen Eleanor’s unpopularity, died at Savoy the same year that prince Edward left England.<sup>1</sup>

From the exchequer rolls of this reign,<sup>2</sup> some light is thrown on the domestic usages of royalty in the middle ages. The royal table was, it should seem, chiefly supplied by the sheriffs of the counties, or the bailiffs of towns. Thus, we find that the sheriff of the counties of Buckingham and Bedford, by the king’s command, on one occasion brought four hundred and twenty-eight hens to Westminster, for his use. The bailiffs of Bristol provided conger eels, and the sheriffs of Essex, fowls and other victuals. The bailiffs of Newhaven brought lampreys. The sheriff of Gloucester was commanded to cause twenty salmons to be put into his pies, against Christmas. The herring pies of Yarmouth and Norwich still form part of their quit-rent to the crown. The sheriff of Sussex was to furnish brawn, and other provisions, for the royal use. The sheriff of Wiltshire provided oxen, hogs, sheep, fruit, corn, and many other things for the queen, when she was at her dower castle of Marlborough. These requisitions were, however, by no means confined to eatables. In the thirty-seventh of Henry III.’s reign, the sheriffs of Wiltshire and Sussex were each ordered to buy a thousand ells of fine linen, and to send it to the royal wardrobe at Westminster before the next Whitsuntide; and the linen was to be very fair and delicate in

<sup>1</sup> Wikes.

<sup>2</sup> Madox’s Hist. Exchequer Liberat. 37 H. III. m. 4. Some of these supplies we know were quit-rents, as the herring pies of Yarmouth and Norwich. The sheriffs, in other instances, bought the productions for which each locality was famous, and paid themselves out of the crown rents of the county or city.

quality. In the forty-second of Henry, the sheriffs of Norfolk and Suffolk were commanded to disburse thirty bezants, to be offered at St. Edmund's shrine, for the king and queen, and their children. The sheriff of Nottinghamshire was enjoined to cause the queen's chamber at Nottingham castle to be painted with the history of Alexander the Great; and the sheriff of Southampton to cause the image of St. Christopher, with our Saviour in his arms, and the image of St. Edward the king, to be painted in her chapel at Winchester.<sup>1</sup>

In one of the Tower rolls, dated Woodstock, April 30th, in the thirty-second year of Henry III.'s reign, that monarch directs his treasurer and chamberlain to pay Master Henry the poet, whom he affectionately styles, "our beloved Master Henry, the versificator," one hundred shillings, due to him for the arrears of his salary, enjoining them to pay it without delay, though the exchequer was then shut.

In the great roll of the forty-ninth of Henry III. there is a curious account of queen Eleanor's wardrobe expenses, as rendered by Hugh of the Pen; from the feast of St. Philip and St. James, in the forty-first year of the king her husband, till the feast of St. Simon and St. Jude, forty-ninth year, under the control of Alexander de Bradeham, chaplain to the queen. The accounts are of a more creditable nature to Eleanor than might be imagined, when we consider the reckless expenditure of the first years of her marriage.<sup>2</sup> There was expended in the linen department, the butlery, kitchen, scullery, salsary, hall, in feeding the poor, in liveries of garçons, farriery and shoeing of horses, six thousand eight hundred and sixteen pounds. In oblations for holidays, and alms distributed daily, and by the wayside, one hundred and fifty-one pounds and eighteen shillings. In silks, mantles, upper garments, linen hose for her ladies, and other miscellaneous expenses for the wardrobe, a hundred and four-score pounds, eleven shillings, and twelve-pence halfpenny. In horses purchased, and robes for the queen's family, in mending robes, in shoes, saddles, reins, almonds, wax, and other necessities for the wardrobe, one thousand six hundred and ninety-one pounds, twelve shillings, and one penny. In gifts presented to knights, clerks, and other

<sup>1</sup> Madox's Hist. Excheq. Rolls, Memoranda, and Liberat. of that reign.

<sup>2</sup> From the perusal of the ancient rolls, it appears that a part of the royal revenue was always devoted to alms. This alms was called *Eleemosyna constituta*, or settled alms, and we find that pensions were accustomed to be paid to the servants of the king and queen, when sickness or age incapacitated them from the performance of their respective duties. In the reign of Henry III., the sheriffs of London were commanded "to pay unto Richard the carter the penny per day of the king's alms, which Nicholas the carpenter used to receive of the sheriffs of that city for the time being." The king granted to Elias de Mileford, for his good service, three halfpence per day during his life; and to Pentecost de Farnham, the king's porter, twopence per day, to be received of the sheriff of Essex, until the king should otherwise provide for him. In the royal household there was an *Eleemosyna statuta* and *forinseca*, besides what was dispensed in oblations and daily alms, by the hands of the king and queen's almoners, in clothing for the poor, and other necessities sent to them. These alms and charities, with others of the like kind, were disbursed out of the king's wardrobe, and the queen's private charities out of her wardrobe accounts.

messengers coming to the queen, three hundred and sixty-eight pounds, eleven shillings, and ten-pence. In secret gifts and private alms, four thousand and seventeen pounds, ten shillings, and three-pence. In jellies, spices, apples, pears, and other fruit, two hundred and fifty-two pounds, sixteen shillings, and nine-pence halfpenny. In jewels bought for the queen's use, to wit, eleven rich garlands, with emeralds, pearls, sapphires, and garnets, of the value of one hundred and forty-five pounds, four shillings, and fourpence. The sum-total of these expenses is £21,960 3s. 7½d., and the accomptant acknowledges that he was in surplusage £10,446 3s. 3d. Thus, we see how large a portion of her income Eleanor of Provence devoted to charitable purposes. But the character of this queen undoubtedly improved as she advanced into the vale of years.

When men were indebted to the queen for *aurum reginæ*, she sometimes respited, pardoned, and discharged the debt, as she saw fit.<sup>1</sup> Eleanor of Provence, oppressive and exacting as she was, occasionally exercised this gracious prerogative, as we learn from memoranda contained in the rolls of the Exchequer, where it is recorded that the queen gave respite to Imoyne de Sulleye for thirty marks, which he owed her for *aurum reginæ*; and in the same roll, dated Southampton, it is certified, "that the queen pardoned Patrick de Chauces a hundred shillings, owed for queen-gold, due on the fine which he paid to the king, to have seisin of the lands that were his patrimony."<sup>2</sup> In the fifth roll there is also record of Thomas, son of Aucher, having respite of the fine of fifteen marks, due for a trespass in the forest, and of the portion coming to Eleanor.

The nuptials of queen Eleanor's second son, Edmund, earl of Lancaster and Derby, with the beautiful Aveline, heiress of William Fortibus, earl of Albemarle, had been celebrated on the 8th of April, 1270, before his departure for the Holy Land. The youthful bride died before his return, in the first year of her nuptials.<sup>3</sup>

Her death was quickly followed by that of the king of the Romans; for grief of which, king Henry fell into the deepest dejection of mind, and, having been in person to quell a riot in Norwich, in which great part of the cathedral was burnt, he was attacked with a mortal sickness at Bury St. Edmunds: but his anxiety to settle the affairs of the kingdom caused him to insist on being carried on to London by short stages. When the dying monarch arrived in the metropolis, finding his dissolution at hand, he summoned Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester, into his

<sup>1</sup> Madox's History of the Exchequer.

<sup>2</sup> The care of the wards of the crown was occasionally granted to the queen, as we find by a memorandum of Henry III., specifying that queen Eleanor, having the custody of Baldwin de Lisle, her ward, the hereditary chamberlain of the exchequer, she presented Thomas Esperen to the barons to fulfil his duties as deputy chamberlain, and her appointment was confirmed by the king.

<sup>3</sup> She was interred, with pompous obsequies, in Westminster Abbey, near the altar; her stately monument and effigy adding another ornament to the marvels of sculptured art, with which the exquisite taste of Henry III. had graced that august repository of England's royal dead.



presence, and made him swear to preserve the peace of England, during the absence of prince Edward. He expired on the 16th of November, 1272, aged sixty-six, having reigned fifty-six years and twenty-days. His decease happening in the night, John Kirkeby delivered the royal seal the next morning to Peter of Winchester, keeper of the wardrobe, the archbishop of York, and the rest of the council.<sup>1</sup>

By the only will king Henry ever made, queen Eleanor having been appointed regent of England, she caused the council to assemble at the New Temple, on the 20th of November, the feast of St. Edmond the martyr and king, where, by her consent<sup>2</sup> and appointment, and the advice of Robert Kilwardby, archbishop of Canterbury, the earl of Gloucester, and the chief peers and prelates of the realm, her eldest son, prince Edward, was proclaimed king of England, by the style and title of Edward I.

The remains of king Henry, royally robed and crowned, were, according to his own desire, placed in the old coffin, in which the body of Edward the Confessor had originally been interred, and buried near the shrine of that monarch in Westminster Abbey. The knights templars, with the consent of queen Eleanor, his widow, undertook the care and expense of his funeral, which was very magnificent.<sup>3</sup> They raised a sumptuous monument to his memory, which was afterwards richly inlaid with jasper and precious stones, brought from the Holy Land by his son Edward I. for that purpose.

We copy the translation of his Latin epitaph from Stow :

"The friend of pity and alms-deed,  
Henry the Third whilome of England king,  
Who this church brake, and after, at his meed,  
Again renewed into this fair building,  
Now resteth here, which did so great a thing."

After the funeral of king Henry, the barons went in solemn procession to the high altar of Westminster Abbey, and swore fealty to their absent sovereign.

In 1273, the widowed queen, on account of some misgovernment,<sup>4</sup> dissolved the old foundation of the hospital of St. Katharine, by the Tower, and refounded it in honour of the same saint, for a master, a chaplain, three brethren, three sisters, ten bedeswomen, and six poor scholars.

The pope addressed a pastoral letter of condolence to Eleanor, on the death of the king her husband; it is written jointly to her and king Edward, whom he felicitates on his accession, and requests Eleanor to give him the letter on his return.

Soon after his return, Edward I. was forced to rectify a wrong committed by his mother, which was much in the style of her former acts of rapacity. Just before the death of her husband she had persuaded him to grant her the custody of London bridge for six years. Before that term was expired, the citizens found their new-built bridge was

<sup>1</sup> Stow.

<sup>2</sup> Harrison's Survey.

<sup>3</sup> Speed. Sir Harris Nicolas. Chron. Hist.

<sup>4</sup> Pennant's London.

suffering great injury, "for," they declared, in their supplication king, "the said lady queen taketh all the tolls, and careth not how the bridge is kept." Edward I. soon put an end to his mother's unconscientious proceedings.

Eleanor of Provence lost her husband and daughter in one year; for scarcely had the tomb closed over the mortal remains of her royal lord ere she was called upon to mourn the death of her eldest daughter, Margaret queen of Scotland. This lady had come to pay her mother a dutiful visit of condolence, on the death of the king her father, and died in England in the thirty-third year of her age, and the twenty-second of her marriage, leaving only one daughter, who was married to Eric, king of Norway, and was the mother of the Maid of Norway, heiress of Scotland.

But the rejoicings and festivities of the coronation of Edward I. received a melancholy interruption in consequence of the death of the duchess of Bretagne, who came, with her lord, to witness the inauguration of her royal brother, and died very unexpectedly a few days afterwards, in the thirtieth year of her age, greatly lamented by her illustrious consort, and by her mother queen Eleanor. Matthew of Westminster says she was a princess of great beauty and wit.<sup>2</sup>

Queen Eleanor and Edward I. preserved a great regard for the duke of Bretagne, after the decease of lady Beatrice.

There is a letter in the second volume of the *Fædera* from Eleanor, during her widowhood, to the king her son, in which she appears to take a lively interest in the welfare of her son-in-law. It is thus headed:—

<sup>1</sup> Stow's London.

<sup>2</sup> There is a letter in the first volume of the *Fædera*, from Blanche duchess of Bretagne, the mother-in-law of this princess, addressed to Henry III., in which there is affectionate mention made of Beatrice and her eldest son. We transcribe the letter, as affording one of the earliest specimens of familiar correspondence between royal personages in the middle ages. After the usual superscription to her very high and very dear lord Henry, by the grace of God, king of England, &c. &c., she commences:—

"Sire, I pray that you will be pleased to inform us of your state, which may our Lord of his grace make always good; for know, my dear lord, that I have great joy at all times in having good news of you.

"Know, sire, that my lady Beatrice, your dear daughter and ours, is still sick of her fever, but is much better, God be thanked, and her physicians tell us that her fever cannot last long.

"I pray you, my dear lord, if we have anything in our parts that you would like me to send, to inform me; for know, sire, that I shall have very great joy if I can do anything for you. And know, sire, that Arthur is good and very beautiful, God be thanked! Our Lord have you in his care."

This letter is dated 1265, and is written in old French. There is also a letter in Latin from the young duchess Beatrice to the king her father, on the same page of the *Fædera*, written at the time of this illness, which she says is "a quartan fever or ague," and she entreats her father "not to distress himself on account of her indisposition."—She had six children by the duke of Bretagne with whom she lived happily twelve years. She was buried in the church of the Grey Friars.

"LETTER OF ALIANORA, THE MOTHER OF THE KING, FOR JOHN DUKE OF BRETAGNE, WHILE TRAVELLING IN A FAR COUNTRY.<sup>1</sup>

"Alianor, by the grace of God, queen of England, to the king our son, health with our benison.

"Inasmuch as our son, John of Bretagne, is in a foreign land, and requires of me as his mother, and you as his lord, some recommendation, our Sir John de Maurre (his seneschal in England) ought to go to La Doure quickly to hear certain tidings of his lord.

"We pray and require that you would grant this, as *my* Sir Nicol de Stapleton can attend to his wants in this country, and we wish that you would send your letter by him, as he will understand it, for he will not go without your especial command; and we pray you that you will do it quickly, and if you will please to give the power by your letter that he may have *attorne*,<sup>2</sup> where he pleases, the same as you granted to the Sire de Dreux, his brother.

"And excuse Sir John de Maurre that he cannot make his *congé* to you before he departs, for he cannot do it on account of haste. We commend you to God.

"Given at Lutgershall, 8th day of October."

It is probable that Eleanor was suffering from some kind of sickness, in the year 1275, for we find in the *Fœdera* a protection granted by Edward I. "to Master William, the Provençal, *physico* to the queen-mother, whom the said queen had procured to come to her from beyond seas." It is especially provided, in this protection, "That the Provençal physician is to be left in quiet at all times and places, save that he is to be answerable for any debts that he may contract in this country."

It has been generally asserted that Eleanor of Provence retired to the nunnery of Ambresbury, soon after the coronation of her son Edward I.; but this does not appear to have been the case, for several of her precepts and letters are dated from Waltham, Guildford, Lutgershall, and other places.<sup>3</sup> She retired to Ambresbury as a residence in 1280, but she did not take the veil till four years afterwards.

There is an original letter from queen Eleanor to her son, king Edward, dated from Waltham :

"Alianora, by the grace of God, queen of England, to our dear son the king, health and our blessing.

"We have sent your prayer to the king of France, that he may lend his aid in purchasing our share of the land of Provence.<sup>4</sup> We have done the letter for you, which you sent to us, and we pray you to hear it read, and if it please you, have it sealed, and if not, that you would be pleased to command it to be amended, and sent forthwith to your aunt, my lady of France. We also entreat you that you would send to Mestre Bonnet, your clerk, that he would show and advance this request in the court of France as much as he can. We commend you to God.

"Given at Waltham, 8th day of July, 1282."

The four younger sons of queen Eleanor, Richard, John, William,

<sup>1</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. ii. p. 221.

<sup>2</sup> Suppose attorney letters of pecuniary credit.

<sup>3</sup> Rymer, vol. ii.

<sup>4</sup> From this letter it appears that the surviving co-heiresses of Provence, of whom our Eleanor was one, compounded their rights for money to their young sister, who, by the will of their father Berenger, was to succeed to the sovereignty of that district. This sister, Beatrice, was the wife of the brother of St. Louis, Charles of Anjou, in whose line the beautiful county of Provence descended to France by the cession of the father of our unhappy queen, Margaret of Anjou.

and Henry, all died before the king their father; so that, of her nine children, two sons only were surviving at the time she retired to Ambresbury. In the year 1280, her son, king Edward, visited her there, when he was on his march to Wales. Queen Eleanor then showed him a man who said he had received his sight through the miraculous interposition of the late king Henry III., in consequence of having offered up his prayers at his tomb.

Edward, whose sound judgment taught him to regard the legend with the contempt its falsehood merited, entreated his mother not to bestow her patronage on a base impostor, whom a prince of his father's piety and justice, would certainly rather have punished with loss of speech for his hypocrisy, than restored to sight, had he indeed possessed the power of doing either.<sup>1</sup>

Two years after this date, king Edward again visited his widowed mother in her monastic retreat. Her profession as a nun did not take place till the year 1284, when she was solemnly veiled, in the church of Ambresbury; and, according to the words of her contemporary Wikes, "she laid down the diadem from her head, and the precious purple from her shoulders, and with them all worldly ambition." She persuaded her young grand-daughter, the princess Mary, the fifth daughter of Edward I. and his queen Eleanor of Castille, to take the vows at the same time, together with Eleanor, daughter to the deceased duchess of Bretagne.

Queen Eleanor, though bent on a conventual life, had delayed her profession till she could obtain the pope's license to keep her rich dowry as queen-dowager of England.<sup>2</sup>

She received the tenderest attention and respect from her son, king Edward, who regarded her with great affection; and once, when he was going to France to meet the king, his cousin, on a matter of the greatest importance, and had advanced as far as Canterbury on his journey, receiving intelligence of the sudden and alarming illness of his mother, he instantly gave up his French voyage, and hastened to her.

Matthew of Westminster mentions the profession of queen Eleanor as taking place in the year 1287, in the following terms:—"That generous virago, Ælianora, queen of England, and mother of the king, took the veil and religious habit at Ambresbury, on the day of the translation of St. Thomas, the archbishop of Canterbury, having obtained leave of the pope to keep possession of her dower in perpetuity, according to her wish."

After queen Eleanor's profession, her uncle, Philip, earl of Savoy, applied to her and her son, king Edward, requesting them to choose from among his nephews a successor to his dominions, as he was himself childless, and distracted by the intrigues and quarrels of the rival claimants.<sup>3</sup>

There is a long letter in the *Fœdera* on this subject, addressed jointly to Eleanor, the queen-mother, and king Edward her son, by the dying

<sup>1</sup> M. Westminster. T. Wikes.

<sup>2</sup> T. Wikes. *Annals of Waverley*.

<sup>3</sup> Fymer's *Fœdera*, vol. ii.

earl, in which he entreats them to decide for him, and "declares that his bishops and nobles are willing to recognise whomsoever they may think proper to appoint for his heir."

Queen Eleanor was, in the following year, named as executor to Philip of Savoy's last will and testament, jointly with her son, king Edward. The testator, with many compliments to "the wisdom, prudence, affection, and, more than that, the good faith and probity of the queen and her son, commits the disposal of all his personal property to be by them divided between all his nephews and nieces."<sup>1</sup>

It appears that Amadeus, the son of the deceased Thomas of Savoy, earl of Flanders, was the sovereign chosen by queen Eleanor and her son, king Edward, to succeed to the dominions of her dying uncle.

When Eleanor's life was fast ebbing away, and she lay moaning with pain on her sick-bed, it is recorded that she gave excellent counsel to her son, regarding a very perplexing affair, which had just happened at his court. Edward had given refuge to a state-prisoner, who had escaped from the Châtelet in Paris. This Frenchman was a literary character, and named Thomas de Turbeville. It turned out that Turbeville was in reality a spy, a clerk of the king's council having intercepted a letter, in which the ungrateful man described the best place for seizing king Edward, and taking him prisoner to France. Turbeville, being fully convicted of treason, was condemned to be executed; "but," says Piers, from whom we draw the story, "he had dread to die," and sent the king word that he was willing to confess who had instigated the crime, as several great men at court were implicated in the attempt. Thomas was therefore respited, till the king's pleasure was known. The dutiful monarch was watching by the bedside of his aged mother, when the message was delivered, "that a confession regarding accomplices, usually extorted by torture, was voluntarily offered by Thomas surnamed Troubletown," the literal interpretation of the name of Turbeville. But the dying queen-mother, seeing, perhaps, the things of this world by the light of that which was approaching, offered advice full of wisdom on the subject:

At Ambresbury the king  
With his moder was,  
When to him came tiding  
Of Troubletown Thomas.  
They told him a deal  
Thomas would say to him,  
To warn him full well  
Which were his traitors grim;  
His moder Eleanore  
Abated her great bale,<sup>2</sup>

"Son," said she, "never more  
Trow the traitor's tale;  
*Traitors such as he,  
For hate will make a lie,  
And through each word will be  
Vengeance and felony.*  
Son, on my blessing  
Trow you not his saw,  
But let him have ending  
As traitor by law."

Edward took this wise advice, and Turbeville died without his confession being required, a proceeding which saved the king from many tormenting suspicions, regarding the fidelity of his servants.

Eleanor of Provence survived the king, her husband, nineteen years.

<sup>1</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. ii.

<sup>2</sup> Ceased from moaning with pain

She died at the nunnery of Ambresbury, June 24th, during the absence of her son in Scotland. Thomas Wikes thus records the particulars of her death and burial, in his Latin chronicle, "The fleeting state of worldly glory is shown by the fact, that the same year carried off two English queens, wife and mother of the king, both inexpressibly dear to him. The nuns of Ambresbury not being able to sepulture the queen-mother with sufficient magnificence, had her body embalmed, so that no corruption ensued, and in a retired place reverentially deposited it, till Edward returned from his Scottish campaign. On the king's return, he summoned all his clergy and barons to Ambresbury, where he solemnly completed the entombing of his mother, on the day of the nativity of the blessed Mary, in her conventual church, where her obsequies were reverently celebrated. But the heart of his mother king Edward carried with him to London. Indeed, he brought there the hearts of both the queens;<sup>1</sup> and, on the next Sunday, the day of St. Nicholas, before a vast multitude, they were honourably interred, the conjugal heart in the church of the Friars Preachers, and the maternal heart in that of the Friars Minors,<sup>2</sup> in the same city."

Among the parliamentary rolls, we meet with a remarkably pitiful petition from the converted Jews, patronised "by Dame Alianor, companion of king Henry III.," setting forth, "that their converts had been promised two hundred and two pounds and four-pence, from the exchequer, for their sustenance, which had not been received by them; and that the poor converts prayed their lord, king Edward I., to grant the same, seeing that the said poor converts prayed indefatigably for the souls of the late king Henry and the queen Eleanor, his companion, on whom God have mercy; therefore they hope the said sum may be paid by the treasurer for the sustenance of the converts. For God's sake, sire, take pitie!" is the concluding sentence of this moving supplication.

Queen Eleanor survived to see the conquest of Wales, and the contract of marriage between her grandson, Edward of Caernarvon, the heir of England, and her great-grand-daughter, Margaret, the heiress of Scotland and Norway, through which a peaceful union of those realms with England, Ireland, Wales, Aquitaine, and Ponthieu, was contemplated; an arrangement which promised to render her descendants the most powerful sovereigns in Europe.

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<sup>1</sup> This implies that he had carried the heart of his beloved consort with him to Scotland.

<sup>2</sup> Commonly called the Minories. Those authors are mistaken who say she is buried in St. Edward's chapel; there is no memento of her in Westminster Abbey.

# ELEANORA OF CASTILLE,

SURNAMED THE FAITHFUL,

FIRST QUEEN OF EDWARD I.

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Eleanora Infanta of Castille—Descent—Inheritance—Marriage-treaty—Queen, mother and prince Edward visit Spain—Eleanora's marriage at Burgo—Journey to England—Feast at Tothill—Eleanora retires to France—Returns to England—Sons born—Crusade—Eleanora prepares to share it—Arrives at Acre—Edward's wound—Assassin—Grief of Eleanora—Prince Edward's illness—His will—Birth of Joanna of Acre—Death of Eleanora's sons—Of king Henry—Queen Eleanora visits Rome—Birth of an heir at Maine—Providential escape of king and queen—Land at Dover—Coronation—War—Marriage of Llewellen—Eleanora assists at nuptials—War renewed—Eleanora shares Edward's campaigns—Keeps court at Rhuddlan—Princess born in Wales—Caernarvon Castle—Queen's chamber—The eagle tower—Birth of prince Edward—Death of prince Alphonso—Queen at Guienne—Birth of younger daughters—Queen's plate—Edward departs for the north—Eleanora follows him—Sudden death—King returns—His extreme grief—Follows her corpse—Solemn mourning—Burial—Tomb—Epitaph—Crosses to Eleanora's memory—Traits of the times—Eleanora's improvements—Her creditors—Prayers for her soul—Her children.

THE marriage of the infanta Donna Eleanora of Castille with prince Edward, heir of England, happily terminated a war, which her brother, king Alphonso, surnamed the Astronomer,<sup>1</sup> was waging with Henry III., on account of some obsolete claims the Castillian monarch laid to the province of Gascony.<sup>2</sup>

Alphonso had invaded Guienne, but, contrary to his usual fortune, Henry III. had the best of the contest, and the royal Castillian was glad to make overtures for peace. Henry, who had not the least gall of bitterness in his composition, and was always more willing to promote a festival than continue a fray, luckily recollected that Alphonso had a fair young sister to dispose of, whose age would just suit his heir, prince Edward. He therefore despatched his private chaplain, the bishop of Bath, with his secretary, John Mansel, from Bordeaux, to demand the hand of the young Infanta, as a pledge of her brother's placable intentions. These ambassadors speedily returned with Don Alphonso's con-

<sup>1</sup> He was the celebrated royal philosopher who invented the Alphonsine tables of astronomy. His countrymen called him, *Il Sabio*, or the Wise.

<sup>2</sup> He pretended that Henry II. had settled this province on his daughter Eleanora, queen of Castille.

sent, inscribed in a scroll sealed with gold.<sup>1</sup> Alphonso stipulated that the English prince should come to Burgos, to receive the hand of his bride, five weeks before Michaelmas-day, 1254; otherwise the contract should be null and void.

The stipulation was not unreasonable, for both the mother and grandmother of the bride had been long engaged to English princes, who had broken their troth.

The king of Castille was but half-brother to the young donna Eleanora. She was the only child of Ferdinand III. of Castille, by Joanna, countess of Ponthieu, who had been many years before contracted to Henry III., king of England. Joanna inherited Ponthieu from her mother,—that princess, Alice of France, whose betrothment with Richard Cœur de Lion, in the preceding century, had involved Europe in war. Eleanora, as the sole descendant of these princesses, was heiress presumptive to Ponthieu and Aumerle, which provinces the royal widow of Castille, her mother, retained in her own possession.

When the preliminaries of the marriage were settled, the queen of England, Eleanor of Provence, set out for Bordeaux, with her son prince Edward, and from thence travelled across the Pyrenees with him to Burgos, where they arrived August 5th, 1254, within the time limited by the royal astronomer.

A stately festival was held in the capital of Castille, in honour of the nuptials of the young Infanta with the heir of England. At a tournament given by king Alphonso, the prince received knighthood from the sword of his brother-in-law. Edward was just fifteen, and the princess some years younger,<sup>2</sup> at the time of their espousals.

After the chivalric festivities at Burgos had ceased, queen Eleanor re-crossed the Pyrenees, accompanied by her son and young daughter-in-law. King Henry waited at Bordeaux to receive his son's bride.<sup>3</sup> He had prepared so grand a festival for the reception of the young Infanta, that he expended three hundred thousand marks on her marriage-feast, to the indignation of his English peers. When one of them reproached him for this extravagance, the king replied, in a dolorous tone :

"O! for the head of God say no more of it, lest men should stand amazed at the relation thereof!"

Henry settled on the prince, his heir, all the Aquitanian domains, inherited from Eleanora, his grandmother; he likewise created him prince of Wales, with an exhortation to employ his youth in conquering the principality, of which he and his princess, rather prematurely, assumed the title, together with that of Guienne. One thousand pounds per annum was the dower settled on the young Eleanora, in case the prince should die before his father.

Henry III. ordered a suite of rooms to be fitted up for his daughter-in-law, in the castle of Guildford; his directions particularly specify

<sup>1</sup> Preserved in the Chapter House at Westminster. (Rapin.)

<sup>2</sup> She is mentioned by all chroniclers as a very young girl. Piers of Langtoft, her contemporary, speaks of her as a child. Her age seems about ten, at this period. Robert of Gloucester, Piers, and Matthew Paris, are the authorities for the events of this marriage.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew Paris.



that her chamber is to have glazed windows, a raised hearth, a chimney, a wardrobe, and an adjoining oratory, or oriel.<sup>1</sup>

The young princess accompanied the royal family to England, through France, and at Paris was lodged in the Temple, where Henry III. gave that celebrated banquet to St. Louis, mentioned, in the preceding memoirs, as the feast of kings. High festivals and honours were prepared for her reception in England. The most noted of these was the grand entertainment, given by the secretary of state, John Mansel, a priest, to king Henry, queen Eleanora, the bride of prince Edward, the prince himself, the king and queen of Scotland, with such numbers of their retinue, that John Mansel's house at Tothill could not hold half the company; they were lodged in tents and green booths, set up round the mansion.<sup>2</sup> Seven hundred messes of meat were served up at this dinner.

Prince Edward and his young bride passed over to Bordeaux in 1256; and while Eleanora was completing her education, the young prince led the wandering life of a knight-errant, "haunting tournaments," wherever they were given.<sup>3</sup> He was at Paris, tilting at a very grand jousting match in 1260, when news was brought him of the violent dissensions between the English barons and his father, which led to the fearful civil war that convulsed England for more than three years. During the whole of that disastrous era, his young princess resided in France, with the rest of the royal family, either with queen Marguerite of France, or with her own mother at Ponthieu.

After the heroic efforts of prince Edward had freed his father and restored him to his throne, and the country breathed in peace after the dreadful strife at Evesham, the royal ladies of England ventured to return. On the 29th of October, 1265, Eleanor of Provence, queen of England, with her daughter-in-law, Eleanora of Castille, landed at Dover,<sup>4</sup> where they were received by Henry III. and prince Edward; from thence they were escorted to Canterbury, where the royal party was magnificently entertained by the archbishop.

Prince Edward had left his wife an uninformed girl; she was now a lovely young woman of twenty, to whose character the uncertainty of fortune had assuredly given a favourable bias. The prince conveyed his restored wife to St. John's, Smithfield, after a magnificent welcome by the citizens. Eleanora afterwards removed to the palace of the Savoy,<sup>5</sup> which had been originally built by count Peter of Savoy, her husband's uncle, and afterwards purchased by Eleanor of Provence, as a London inn, or residence for the younger branches of her family. This was the abode of Eleanora of Castille when she attended the court at Westminster, but her favourite residence was the castle of Windsor. Here her eldest child was born, the year after her return to England; he was named John, after his grandfather of evil memory. In the succeeding year, 1266, Eleanora gave birth, at Windsor, to a princess named Eleanora, and the year after to prince Henry. The beauty of these children, and their early promise, so much delighted their royal grandfather, that he greatly augmented the dower of the mother.

<sup>1</sup> Stow's London.

<sup>2</sup> Piers of Langtoft.

<sup>3</sup> Pictorial History of England.

<sup>4</sup> Wikes.

<sup>5</sup> Grafton. Stow.

Prince Edward took up the cross in 1269, and his virtuous princess resolved to share the perils of his Syrian campaign. Before she departed from England, she accompanied her mother-in-law, in a grand progress to various shrines. During the royal progress to Northampton, the princess Eleanora made a pilgrimage to Dunstable, in company with queen Eleanor, and offered at the shrine of St. Peter an altar-cloth of gold brocade, as a thanksgiving for the health of her children. On her return, she assisted at a magnificent convocation of the barons of England in Westminster Hall, where they swore fealty and kissed the hand of her little son, prince John, and recognised him as his father's successor, in case of the death of Edward, in the ensuing crusade.

A contemporary historian<sup>1</sup> has left us a very graphic portrait of the husband of Eleanora, at this period of his life. "He was a prince of elegant form, and majestic stature, so tall that few of his people reached his shoulder. His ample forehead and prominent chest added to the dignity of his personal appearance. His arms were most agile in the use of the sword, and his length of limb gave him a firm seat on the most spirited horses. His hair was light before his eastern campaigns, but became dark in middle life. His left eyebrow had a slightly oblique fall, giving a shade of resemblance to his father's face, in whose portrait this defect is very strongly marked. The speech of Edward was sometimes hesitating, but when animated was passionately eloquent." His disposition, which Eleanora of Castille had the sole merit of softening and reforming, was naturally a fiery one, but generous when opposition ceased.<sup>2</sup>

In vain did the ladies of Eleanora represent to her the hardships and dangers, ever attendant on a crusade; for death on the Asiatic coast threatened in many forms beside the sword. The princess replied in

<sup>1</sup> Hemingford.

<sup>2</sup> Walsingham relates a circumstance of prince Edward, which took place before the Syrian campaign; it is an anecdote that casts some light on his character. "Hawking one day on a river, he saw one of his barons not attending to a falcon, that had just seized a duck among the willows. Prince Edward upbraided him for his neglect; and the noble tauntingly replied, 'it was well for him that the river parted them.' Stung by the remark, the prince plunged into the stream, though ignorant of its depth, and having with difficulty reached the opposite side, pursued the noble lord with his drawn sword, who, seeing escape hopeless, turned round his horse, flung off his cap, and advancing to Edward, threw himself on his mercy, and offered his neck to the blow: this submission disarmed the prince; he sheathed his sword, and rode home quietly with the offender." An accident that happened to the prince, just before the Syrian campaign, gave a devotional turn to his mind. One day, when he was playing at chess at Windsor with a knight, the prince suddenly, from an impulse, rose from his game, without any motive or decided purpose which he could define even to himself; the next moment the centre stone of the groined ceiling above him fell on the very spot where he had been sitting. From this accident he believed himself to be under the special protection of Providence, and reserved for some great purpose; he attributed his preservation to our lady of Walsingham. Why that Norfolk shrine was connected with his preservation, the chronicle does not inform us; but from that time this English lady of Loretto was beset with votaries.

words that well deserve to be remembered and noted. "Nothing," said this admirable lady, "ought to part those whom God hath joined, and the way to heaven is as near, if not nearer, from Syria, as from England or my native Spain."<sup>1</sup>

Much has been said regarding the conjugal fidelity of prince Edward. But previously to his Syrian campaign he was impetuous and wilful in character, and far from a faultless husband. He had inspired the earl of Gloucester with a mad jealousy,<sup>2</sup> who not only accused him of criminal intimacy with his countess, but declared that he, the earl of Gloucester, had been poisoned by the agency of prince Edward, and the faithless countess. It is to be feared that the countess of Gloucester was a great coquette, for she had previously been exercising her powers of fascination on the old king, for in the Wakefield Tower has recently been discovered a very curious letter from Margaret, queen of France, expressing uneasiness, for her sister's sake, at the intimacy between Henry III. and this countess.<sup>3</sup> The scandal regarding prince Edward's attention to the fair countess had commenced before the reunion of Eleanora with her husband, in 1264; but its effects convulsed the court with broils, till the princess left the court and all its turmoils in the spring of 1270; when she bade farewell to the two lovely boys she never saw again, and sailed for Bordeaux, where she superintended the preparations for the crusade campaign.<sup>4</sup>

Edward sailed from Portsmouth about a month later, and met his consort at Bordeaux; they proceeded to Sicily, where they sojourned during the winter, with the expectation that St. Louis, the king of France, would unite in the crusade. Soon after their arrival, tidings were brought of the death of St. Louis, at Tunis, and the discomfiture of his army.

The king of Sicily, who was brother to St. Louis, and husband to Edward's aunt, endeavoured to persuade his royal guests to give up their crusading expedition; whereupon prince Edward struck his breast, and exclaimed with energy,—

"Sangue de Dieu, if all should desert me,<sup>5</sup> I would lay siege to Acon, if only attended by Fowen, my groom!"

The following spring, Edward and Eleanora arrived at Ptolemais. The prince made an expedition as far as Nazareth,<sup>6</sup> and put all the garrison to the sword; and when the Saracens came to their rescue, he engaged the infidel army, and defeated them with great slaughter. He won another battle, June 1271, at Cahow, and thus terminated his first and second campaign. He returned to Cyprus for the winter, and, being reinforced by the Cypriots, undertook the siege of Acre the succeeding summer, still attended by his faithful Eleanora.

The emir of Joppa, who was the Saracen admiral, pretending that he was desirous of becoming a Christian convert, had sent a messenger

<sup>1</sup> Camden's Remains.

<sup>2</sup> Stow's Chronicle.

<sup>3</sup> Fourth report of the records, in the calendar of the royal letters in the Wakefield Tower.

<sup>4</sup> Matthew of Westminster.

<sup>5</sup> W. Rishanger; likewise M. Paris.

<sup>6</sup> Knolles' History of the Turks.

several times with letters to the prince of England. This envoy was one of the agents of the Old Man of the Mountains, who kept a band for secret murders, called Assassins. After the cunning fanatic had created a confidence in Edward's mind by frequent messages, he was introduced into the royal chamber, bringing letters, for the fifth time, from the emir. The prince was indisposed from the heat of the climate, and was lying on his bed bareheaded, wearing only a white vest. The assassin gave him some letters to read, written on purpose to please the Christian prince. They were alone in the apartment, because the negotiation touched the life and honour of the admiral of Joppa, therefore secrecy was imperatively needful. The assassin pretended that he had another paper to deliver, but he drew out with it a poniard, and aimed a blow at the side of the prince, as he lay before him on the bed. Fortunately Edward perceived the treachery, and, suddenly raising his arm, received the blow upon it. The assassin endeavoured to reiterate the stroke, but Edward, who seems not yet to have risen from his recumbent posture, felled him to the ground, with a kick on the breast: again the assassin returned to the attack, and the prince finally killed him, with a tressel, or stool, that stood by. The attendants, hearing the scuffle, came running in, and the prince's harper, or minstrel, beat out the assassin's brains; whereat the prince sternly reproached him, asking, "What was the use of striking a dead man?"

After some days, the prince's wounded arm began to show unfavourable symptoms, and the flesh blackening, exhibited signs of mortification; insomuch that all about him began to look heavily upon each other. "Why whisper ye thus among yourselves?" said the prince; "what see ye in me? Tell the truth, and fear not!" Then Hemingford<sup>1</sup> declares, that the master of the Temple recommended incisions, which would be exquisitely painful. "If suffering," said the prince to the surgeon, brought to him by the master of the Temple, "may again restore my health, I commit myself to you; work on me your will, and spare not."

Eleanora was by his bedside at this dreadful crisis: she lost her firmness, and bewailed, with a passion of tears, the anguish about to be inflicted on her husband.

Edward, with his usual decision of character, cut short the agony of his wife, by bidding his brother Edmund, and his favourite knight, John de Vesci, carry the princess out of the room. They took her in their arms, and bore her from the apartment, she shrieking and struggling all the time, till her brother-in-law told her, "that it was better she should scream and cry, than all England mourn and lament."<sup>2</sup>

The surgical operation was effectual; in fifteen days Edward was able to mount his horse, though his health was long in a precarious state. He always attributed his final recovery to the tender care and attention of Eleanora. But if there had been any truth in the story of her sucking the poison from his wound,<sup>3</sup> the narrators of the scene, who have en-

<sup>1</sup> Walter Hemingford's Chronicle.

<sup>2</sup> Knighton and Hemingford.

<sup>3</sup> The story is to be found quoted by Camden, but only as recorded by Sanctius, a Spanish historian, who lived a hundred and fifty years after the siege of Acre

tered into its details so minutely, would not have forgotten the circumstance.

While yet in ill health, prince Edward made his will.<sup>1</sup> With a philosophy rare at this era, he leaves his body to be buried wherever his executors please.

To his principal executor, his brother-in-law and fellow-crusader, John duke of Bretagne, he leaves the guardianship of his children, if he should die before they come of age. He provides for the dowry of his dear wife Eleanora, but does not leave her either guardian to the realm, in reversion, or to her children.

Scarcely was the prince recovered from his wound, when Eleanora brought into the world an infant princess, named Joanna, and called from the place of her birth, Joanna of Acre.<sup>2</sup>

The next remarkable event that happened at Acre, while Eleanora remained there with her royal lord, was, that a pope was chosen, in a manner, out of their household. Theobald, archbishop of Liege, who attended the royal pair on their crusade, was in his absence elected to the papal throne, which he ascended under the name of Gregory X. This pontiff had been the tutor of prince Edward.

The army of the prince being reduced by sickness, want, and desertion, he considered that it was useless to tarry longer in Syria. Leaving behind him a reputation not inferior to that of his great-uncle, Cœur de Lion, Edward turned his back most reluctantly on the Holy Land; and, with his princess and her infant daughter, arrived safely at Sicily, where heavy tidings awaited them.

The news first reached them that prince John, their lovely and promising heir, whose talents were unequalled for his years, had died August 1, 1272. Scarcely had the princess and her husband received this intelligence, when they heard of the death of their second son, prince Henry; and a third messenger brought the news to Messina, that king Henry III. was dead, and that prince Edward was now Edward I. of England. The firmness and resignation, with which Eleanora and Edward bore the loss of their promising boys, surprised every one at the Sicilian court; but when the prince heard the death of his royal sire, he gave way to a burst of anguish so bitter, that his uncle<sup>3</sup> Charles of Anjou, king of Sicily, who was in company with him, astonished at his manner of receiving intelligence that hailed him king, asked him "how it was that he bore the loss of both his sons with such quiet

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and who introduced it in a comment he wrote on the works of Roderigo Toletus. This author does not bear the weight of Walter Hemingford, who mentions Eleanora, but does not allude to this event.

<sup>1</sup>Sir Harris Nicolas. *Testamenta Vetusta*. Edward left no other will.

<sup>2</sup>This princess is the first instance of a misalliance in the royal house of Plantagenet. After the death of her first husband, she stole a match with one of his retainers, Ralph Monthermer, called by some authors his groom, but he was in reality his squire. Joanna was, in 1306, forgiven by her father, on account of the valour her second husband had shown in the Scottish wars. The bishop of Durham was the mediator in this reconciliation.

<sup>3</sup>The husband of his mother's sister.

resignation, and abandoned himself to grief at the death of an aged man?"<sup>1</sup> Edward made this memorable answer:—

"The loss of infants may be repaired by the same God that gave them; but when a man has lost a good father, it is not in the course of nature for God to send him another."

From Sicily queen Eleanora accompanied her royal husband to Rome, where they were welcomed and magnificently entertained by their friend, pope Gregory X.

England, happy in the permanent settlement of her ancient representative government, now, for the first time, practically established since the reign of St. Edward, enjoyed such profound tranquillity, that her young king and queen were able to remain more than a year, in their continental dominions. During this time the queen gave birth, at the town of Maine, to another heir,<sup>2</sup> more beautiful and promising than either of his deceased brethren. The queen named him after her beloved brother Alphonso; a name which sounds strangely to English ears, but had this prince lived to wear the crown of his great father, it would, in all probability, have become as national to England as the names of Edward or George.<sup>3</sup>

A second time, at this juncture, the life of Edward was preserved, in a manner that he considered almost miraculous. As he was sitting with his queen on a couch, in their palace at Bordeaux, a flash of lightning killed two lords who were standing directly behind them, without injuring the royal pair.<sup>4</sup>

Edward, with his queen, made a progress homeward through all his French provinces, tilting at tournaments as he went. Passing through Paris, he did homage to the king of France, for Aquitaine and its dependencies, before he returned to assume the English crown.<sup>5</sup> The king and queen landed at Dover, August 2, 1273. All preparations had been made for their speedy coronation, which took place on the 19th of the same month. They were received in London with the utmost exultation. The merchants, enriched by peaceful commerce with the rich wine provinces of the south, showered gold and silver on the royal retinue, as they passed under the windows of the Chepe.<sup>6</sup> Both houses

<sup>1</sup> Charles was not likely to be troubled with much sensibility, for while St. Louis was bitterly weeping for the death of their mutual brother, the count of Poitou, slain in their crusade, Charles, who was on ship-board, amused himself with playing at *tric-trac* all day long. When the king of France was informed of this hard-hearted way of spending the hours of mourning, he came softly behind his brother in the heat of his game, and seizing his backgammon-board, threw men, dice, and money, into the sea. The humour with which the Lord de Joinville (who saw the incident) relates this anecdote is irresistible.

<sup>2</sup> Paulus Emilius. He was born Nov. 23, 1272.

<sup>3</sup> Alphonso is an abbreviation of Ildefonso, a native Iberian saint.

<sup>4</sup> Matthew Paris.

<sup>5</sup> Walsingham and Wikes.

<sup>6</sup> Edward brought in his train, Guasco, a rebel Gascon baron, whom he had condemned to death, but his punishment seems to have been commuted by his being exhibited, at the London entry, with a rope about his neck. The poor captive expected nothing but death. He was forgiven the capital part of his offence, by the act of indemnity at the coronation. He returned thanks to Edward

of parliament assembled, to welcome and do honour to their constitutional king and his virtuous consort.

At the coronation of Edward and Eleanora preparations were made for the exercise of the most profuse hospitality; the whole areas of the Palace Yards, old and new, were filled with wooden buildings,<sup>1</sup> open at the top, to let out the smoke of cooking. Here, for a whole fortnight, were prepared successions of banquets, served up for the entertainment of all comers; where the independent franklin, the stout yeoman from the country, and the rich citizen and industrious artizan from the metropolis, alike found a welcome, and were entertained gratuitously. Good order was general, and every one delighted with this auspicious commencement of the new reign. Edward and Eleanora were crowned by the hands of Robert Kilwardby, archbishop of Canterbury. One of the most extraordinary features of this coronation is recorded in an old black-letter manuscript chronicle.<sup>2</sup>

"King Edward was crowned and anointed as right heir of England, with much honour and worship, with his virtuous queen; and after mass the king went to his palace to hold a royal feast among all the peers that had done him honour and worship. And when he was set at his meat king Alexander of Scotland came to do him service, and to worship with a *quentyse*,<sup>3</sup> and a hundred knights with him, horsed and arrayed. And when they were light off their horses, they let their horses go whither they would, and they that could catch them had them to their own behoof. And after that came sir Edmund, the king's brother, a courteous knight and a gentleman of renown, and the earl of Gloucester. And after them came the earl of Pembroke and the earl of Warren, and each of them led a horse by their hand, and a hundred of their knights did the same. And when they were alight off their horses they let them go wherever they would, and they that could take them had them still at their liking."

The coronation of Edward and Eleanora had been graced by the presence of the king of Scotland and the duke of Bretagne; but Llewellyn, prince of Wales, absented himself; upon which the king of England sent him a sharp message, "to know wherefore he did not tender homage at the late coronation of himself and queen?" Llewellyn refused to acknowledge that any homage was due; he was a victorious prince, for, taking advantage of the recent civil wars in England, he had reconquered all the territory, which the Norman predecessors of Edward I. had wrested from the Welsh.

The first mischance that befel the Welsh was the capture of the bride of Llewellyn,<sup>4</sup> coming from France; her vessel was seized by the Bristol merchantmen, who carried her prisoner to king Edward. This prince had not yet learned to behave with cruelty to women. The young

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on his knees. This must have made a most striking feature of that part of the ceremony. Guasco was afterwards a loyal friend and subject to Edward.

<sup>1</sup> Ancient Chronicle, quoted by Carte.

<sup>2</sup> Preserved by Sir Robert Cotton.

<sup>3</sup> A quaint devise, or ingenious invention.

<sup>4</sup> Walsingham and Powell's Welsh Chronicles.

damsel, though the daughter of Simon de Montfort, his mortal foe, whom he had slain in battle, was at the same time the child of his aunt, Eleanor Plantagenet. He received her with the courtesy of a kinsman, and consigned her to the gentle keeping of his queen, with whom she resided at Windsor Castle.<sup>1</sup>

The war with Wales lasted till 1278, when Llewellyn, finding it impossible to recover his bride by force of arms, submitted to the required homage, and queen Eleanor brought the lady Elinor Montfort to Worcester, where king Edward bestowed his kinswoman upon Llewellyn, giving her away with his own royal hand, while his amiable queen supported her at the altar of Worcester cathedral, and graced the nuptial feast of prince Llewellyn with her presence. The prince and princess of Wales afterwards accompanied the king and queen to Westminster,<sup>2</sup> with a great retinue of malcontent Snowdon barons, and their vassals.

After this pacification, the death of the queen of Castille caused the provinces of Ponthieu and Aumerle to devolve on her daughter, queen Eleanor, who quitted England with king Edward, in order to take possession of her inheritance, and do homage to the king of France. The return of the royal pair was hastened by another Welsh war; for the fair bride of Llewellyn died, after bringing him a living daughter,<sup>3</sup> and the prince, urged by the songs of the bards, and the indignation of his subjects regarding his homage, suddenly invaded England. The ambiguous words of a prophecy of Merlin, asserting that a prince born in Wales should be the acknowledged king of the whole British island, was the stimulus that led to a war, terminating in the death of the brave Llewellyn.

The gold coronet of the unfortunate prince, taken from his head by

<sup>1</sup> Mill's Catalogue of Honour. Wikes.

<sup>2</sup> The prince of Wales did homage in Westminster Hall. According to an ancient MS., translated by Carte, in his History, the Snowdon barons who accompanied Llewellyn to England with their serfs, were quartered at Islington, where they were anything but comfortable, taking great offence at the fare provided for them. They could neither drink the wine nor the ale of London; mead and Welsh ale could not be got for them; the English bread they refused to eat, and all London could not afford milk enough for their daily diet. They were indignant at the staring of the Londoners, when they walked in the streets in their outlandish garb, and even suspected that the English took them for savages. "No," cried they in chorus, "we will never again visit Islington, excepting as conquerors." Droll as the association of ideas may be between the Welsh bards and Islington, the name of that harmless suburb was the constant refrain of the Welsh bards till Edward silenced them in death. As all the popular agitations were raised by the bards, who were perfectly frantic concerning the prophecies of Merlin at this crisis, their extirpation by Edward is a very probable circumstance, though contested by historians.

<sup>3</sup> This child, whose name was Guendolen, was brought to Edward a captive in her cradle: she was reared, and professed a nun in the convent of Sempringham, with her cousin Gladis, the only daughter of prince David, brother to Llewellyn, which prince was executed by Edward. Thus ended the line of Roderick the Great.—*Piers Langtoft*. Piers mentions his personal acquaintance with these royal votaresses.



lord Mortimer, after the fatal skirmish at Builth, was offered by prince Alphonso, at the shrine of Edward the confessor.

The unsettled state of Wales needed the constant presence of king Edward, to keep down the spirit of the people; and queen Eleanora, who had followed him in all his Welsh campaigns, kept her court at Rhuddlan castle, in the summer of 1283. Here her sixth daughter, the princess Isabella, was born a native of Wales.<sup>1</sup>

Early in spring, 1284, Edward carried his queen to his newly-built castle of Caernarvon, a stronghold he had just finished, to awe the insurgents of the principality. This truly royal fortress, according to the antiquary Pennant, appears at present, in its external state, precisely as when queen Eleanora first entered the stupendous gateway so many centuries ago. The walls are studded by defensive round towers; they have two principal gates, the east facing the Snowdon mountains, the west commanding the Menai. The entrance to the castle is very stately: beneath a noble tower, on the front of which appears the statue of the great Edward,<sup>2</sup> finely carved from the life, drawing a dagger with a stern air, as if menacing his unwilling subjects. This entrance had four portcullises, and every requisite of strength.

To this mighty castle, Edward brought Eleanora, at a time when her situation promised an increase to the royal family. The Eagle Tower, through whose gate the affectionate Eleanora entered, is at a prodigious height from the ground, at the farthest end, and could only be approached by a drawbridge, supported on masses of opposing rock. Every one who beholds it is struck with its grand position: it is still, by the tradition of the district, called queen Eleanor's gate; nor was the Eagle Tower an eyry by any means too lofty, for the security of the royal Eleanora and her expected infant, since most of the Snowdon barons still held out, and the rest of the principality was fiercely chafing at the English curb. This consideration justifies the tradition which points out a little dark den, built in the thickness of the walls, as the chamber where the faithful queen gave birth to her son Edward. The chamber is twelve feet in length, and eight in breadth, and is without a fireplace. Its discomforts were somewhat modified by hangings of tapestry, of which some marks of tenters still appear in the walls.<sup>3</sup> Queen Eleanora was the first person who used tapestry as garniture for walls, in England; and she never needed it more than in her dreary lying-in-chamber at Caernarvon.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Stow.

<sup>2</sup> His noble portrait, engraved by Vertue in Carte, is taken from this statue.

<sup>3</sup> It was the primitive office of the grooms of the chamber to hang up the tapestry, which was always carried in progress with the royal baggage, and sent forwards with the purveyor and grooms of the chamber, so that the queen found the stone walls of her sleeping chamber in comfortable order for her reception.

<sup>4</sup> Among the memorials of queen Eleanora's sojourn at Caernarvon Castle, the cradle of her infant son is still shown. It is hung by rings and staples to two upright pieces of wood, like a cot; it is of rude workmanship, yet with much pretence to ornament, having many mouldings, though the nails are left rough; it is made of oak, and is in length three feet two inches, its width one foot eight inches at the head, and one foot five at the feet; it has rockers, and is crowned

The prince was born April 25th, when fires were not indispensable in a small, close chamber. As a soldier's wife, used to attend her lord in all campaigns, from Syria to Scotland, the queen had, in all probability, met with far worse accommodations, than in the forlorn chamber in the Eagle Tower. The queen certainly provided a Welsh nurse for her infant :<sup>1</sup> she thus proved her usual good sense, by complying with the prejudices of the country.

Edward I. was at Rhuddlan castle, negotiating with the despairing magnates of Wales, when news was brought him, by Griffith Lloyd, a Welsh gentleman, that the queen had made him father of a living son of surpassing beauty. The king was transported with joy ; he knighted the Welshman on the spot, and made him a magnificent donation of lands.<sup>2</sup>

The king hastened directly to Caernarvon, to see his Eleanora and her boy ; and three days after, the castle was the rendezvous of all the chiefs of North Wales, who met to tender their final submission to Edward I., and to implore him, as their lord paramount, to appoint them a prince who was a native of their own country, and whose native tongue was neither French nor Saxon, which they assured him they could not understand.<sup>3</sup>

Edward told them he would immediately appoint them a prince, who could speak neither English nor French. The Welsh magnates, expecting he was a kinsman of their own royal line, declared they would instantly accept him as their prince, if his character was void of reproach ; whereupon the king ordered his infant son to be brought in and presented to them, assuring the assembly, "that he was just born a native of their country, that his character was unimpeached, that he could not speak a word of English or French, and that, if they pleased, the first words he uttered should be Welsh." The fierce mountaineers little expected such a ruler : they had, however, no alternative but submission, and, with as good a grace as they might, kissed the tiny hand which was to sway their sceptre, and vowed fealty to the babe of the faithful Eleanora.<sup>4</sup>

The queen soon changed her residence to her magnificent palace of Conway Castle, where all the elegances of an age further advanced in luxury than is generally supposed, were assembled round her. Many traces of her abode at Conway exist ; among others, her state bed-chamber retains some richness of ornament ; it opens on a terrace commanding a beautiful view. Leading from the chamber is an arched recess called by tradition queen Eleanora's Oriel ; it is raised by steps

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by two birds ; whether doves or eagles antiquaries have not yet decided.—*Boswell's Antiquities.*

<sup>1</sup> There is an entry in the household-book of Edward II. of twenty shillings, which the king presented to Mary of Caernarvon, his nurse, for coming all the way from Wales to see him.

<sup>2</sup> Pennant's Wales.

<sup>3</sup> Speed.

<sup>4</sup> Stow minutely details this incident, the authenticity of which is not only supported by the local traditions of North Wales, but by the giant authority of Selden.

from the floor, and beautifully adorned with painted glass windows. Here the queen of England, during her *levée* or rising, sat to receive the ladies qualified to be presented to her, while her tirewoman combed and braided those long tresses,<sup>1</sup> which are the glory of a Spanish donna, and which her statues show Eleanora of Castille to have possessed. A poem, contemporary with this queen, minutely describes these state toilet places.<sup>2</sup>

<p>"In her oriel there she was, Closed well with royal glass;</p>	<p>Filled it was with imagery, Every window by and by."</p>
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The August following the birth of prince Edward, saw the death of prince Alphonso, the heir of England—an event which deeply afflicted his mother. The same year brought calamity to her brother, king Alphonso X. of Castille.<sup>3</sup> This great prince was the most extraordinary person of his time, but wrapping himself up in his mathematical studies, in the latter part of his reign, his son, Sancho the Brave, deposed him. This event was a source of great grief to Eleanora, for her royal brother was tenderly beloved by her; she had named her favourite child after him, and now, in his reverse of fortune, she urged her royal lord to interfere with her nephew Sancho,<sup>4</sup> for the restoration of her brother. The interposition was in vain, for the learned Alphonso died in confinement.

The death of king Alexander of Scotland, in 1285, opened a new prospect for still further aggrandizing the progeny of queen Eleanora. The heiress of Scotland, the princess Margaret of Norway, great-niece to Edward I., was, by the consent of the nobles of Scotland, solemnly betrothed to Edward of Caernarvon, prince of Wales, and every prospect appeared that the island crowns would be happily united, in the persons of the infant son of Eleanora, and the little queen of Scotland. After this pacification of the whole island, the king and queen resided three years in Aquitaine. Eleanora then gave birth to her seventh and eighth daughters, the princesses Beatrice and Berengaria.

When the queen returned to England, she was urged to devote her fourth daughter, the princess Mary, to the cloister. Her reluctance to relinquish this child is noted by most chroniclers, and produced more than one pathetic epistle from dignitaries of the church, on the impro-

<sup>1</sup> This custom, derived from the middle ages, was continued in France till the revolution. The word *levée*, still used at our court, is derived from it.

<sup>2</sup> Pennant.

<sup>3</sup> This king, surnamed *Il Sabio*, employed the most learned men, not only Europeans, but Arabs and Jews, to assist him in constructing the celebrated Alphonso's Tables, so long the standard of astronomical calculations, showing, withal, some glimpses of the light afterwards cast on science, by Galileo and Sir Isaac Newton. Alphonso paid his learned assistants forty thousand crowns for their services, a benefaction infinitely resented by his combative subjects, who took their monarch and his astronomers for conjurors, and were infuriated that a king should bestow treasure on any peaceful profession.—See *Atlas Géographique*. Alphonso pursued his studies in quiet when imprisoned, consoling himself by considering that his subjects were fools.

<sup>4</sup> Many papers on this subject appear in the *Fœdera*.

piety of withholding from heaven a chosen lamb, from her numerous flock.<sup>1</sup> Among the other admirable qualities of Eleanora, we find freedom from the prejudices of her era. She kept a happy medium between the bold infidelity of her philosophic brother Alphonso, the mathematician,<sup>2</sup> and the superfluous devotion of the middle ages. The princess Mary was, however, veiled, at the age of ten years, at Ambresbury, 1289. The year after her profession the queen added a ninth daughter, the princess Blanche, to her family.

Eleanora reared and educated her numerous train of beautiful princesses, in a retired angle of Westminster Palace, which was given, on account of their residence there, the appellation of the Maiden Hall.<sup>3</sup>

Three of the queen's elder daughters were married, or betrothed in 1290. The princess-royal, Eleanora, was affianced to Alphonso, prince of Arragon: this prince died soon after, when she married the duke of Barr. The next sister, Joanna of Acre, in her eighteenth year, renowned for her beauty and high spirit, was married, with great pomp, at the monastery of the Knights of St. John, Clerkenwell, to the premier peer of England, Gilbert the Red, earl of Gloucester. A few weeks later, queen Eleanora assisted at a still statelier ceremony, when her third daughter, Margaret, then fifteen, wedded, at Westminster Abbey, John, the second duke of Brabant.<sup>4</sup>

Our historians dwell much on the magnificence displayed at the nuptials of these princesses. A list of the plate used in the queen's household will prove that the court of Eleanora had attained a considerable degree of luxury. The plate was the work of Ade, the king's goldsmith, and the description of the rich vessels furnished by this member of the goldsmith's company has been brought to light by modern research.<sup>5</sup> Thirty-four pitchers of gold and silver, calculated to hold water or wine; ten gold chalices, of the value of £140 to £292 each; ten cups of silver gilt, or silver white, some with stands of the same, or enamelled; more than one hundred smaller silver cups, value from four to one hundred and eighteen pounds each; also cups of jasper, plates and dishes of silver, gold salts, alms bowls, silver hanapers or baskets; cups of benison, with holy sentences wrought thereon; enamelled silver jugs,

<sup>1</sup> There are innumerable grants recorded in the *Fœdera* to the nun-princess. Her father grants the forest of Savernake and other woodlands, for fire for her chamber; the port of Southampton is taxed for tuns of wine for her cellar, besides oil for her lamp.

<sup>2</sup> Alphonso is said to have declared, "that he could have devised a better way of ordering the movements of the celestial bodies;" which speech led to his deposition. The fact is, he was not satisfied with his own astronomical tables, and foresaw subsequent improvements.

<sup>3</sup> Brayley's and Britton's *Palace of Westminster*, 114. This portion of the old palace was destroyed by fire, a little time after the queen's death.

<sup>4</sup> The young duchess did not immediately quit England, but had a separate establishment, as appears by the following entry in Edward II.'s household books: "Paid Robert de Ludham thirteen shillings and sixpence, who was porter to the king's daughter, the lady Margaret, duchess of Brabant, when she maintained a household different from the king's son."

<sup>5</sup> By Mr. Herbert, city librarian, in his *History of City Companies*.

adorned with effigies of the king, in a surcoat and hood, and with two effigies of queen Eleanora. It is generally supposed that Tom Coryate, of queer memory, introduced the use of forks from Italy, so lately as the time of James I. But our Provençal Plantagenet queens did not feed with their fingers, whatever their English subjects might do; since in the list of Eleanora's plate occurs a pair of knives with silver sheaths namelled, with a *fork* of crystal, and a silver fork,<sup>1</sup> handled with ebony and ivory. In the list of royal valuables were likewise combs and looking-glasses of silver-gilt, and a bodkin of silver, in a leather case; five serpents' tongues set in a standard of silver; a royal crown set with rubies, emeralds, and great pearls; another with Indian pearls; and one great crown of gold, ornamented with emeralds, sapphires of the East, rubies, and large oriental pearls. This seems to have been Eleanora's state crown, used at the coronation feast. Above all, there is a gold ring with a great sapphire, wrought and set by no other hand but that of St. Dunstan.

The countess of Gloucester brought forth a beautiful boy in the spring of 1291, to the infinite joy and pleasure of her mother. Both the king and queen Eleanora welcomed this first grand-child with delight, and called his name Gilbert.

The autumn of the year 1290 brought threatening clouds to the prosperity of the island kingdoms, and to the royal family of queen Eleanora. The little queen, Margaret of Scotland, was to be sent this year from Norway to Scotland, and thence, by agreement, to the court of England, that she might be educated under the care of the admirable queen of Edward I. The bishop of St. Andrews wrote to king Edward, that a report was spread of the young queen's death,<sup>2</sup> on her homeward voyage. Edward, who had already sent the bishop of Durham<sup>3</sup> and six regents, to take possession of Scotland,<sup>4</sup> in the names of Edward of Caernarvon, and Margaret of Norway, was startled into prompt action at these alarming tidings. He took a hasty farewell of his beloved queen, and charged her to follow him with all convenient speed.

Edward had not reached the Scottish borders, when the fatal news reached him that Eleanora, the faithful companion of his life, in travelling through Lincolnshire, to join him, previously to his entering Scotland, had been seized with a dangerous autumnal fever, at Herdeby, near Grantham.

Ambition, at the strong call of conjugal love, for once released its grasp on the mighty heart of Edward. In comparison with Eleanora, dead or dying, the coveted crown of Scotland was nothing in his esti-

<sup>1</sup> See likewise Record Commission, p. 78, where forks are enumerated among the items of Edward I.'s domestic utensils.

<sup>2</sup> She died at the Orkneys, it is supposed of the fatigue of a very stormy voyage, being driven to those islands by violent weather, October 1290. — See Walsingham. Her death was the greatest national calamity that ever befel Scotland. An elegant female poet, Miss Holford, says—

“The north wind sobs where Margaret sleeps,  
And still in tears of blood her memory Scotland steeps.”

<sup>3</sup> From the Latin of Wikes.

<sup>4</sup> Act. Pub., and Buchanan.

mation. He turned southward instantly; but though he travelled with the utmost speed, he arrived too late to see her living once more. His admirable queen had expired, November 29th, at the house of a gentleman named Weston. She died, according to our calculation, in the forty-seventh year of her age.

The whole affairs of Scotland, however pressing they might be, were obliterated, for a time, from the mind of the great Edward by the acute sorrow he suffered for the death of Eleanora; <sup>1</sup> nor, till he had paid the duties he considered due to her breathless clay, would he attend to the slightest temporal business. In the bitterest grief he followed her corpse in person during thirteen days, in the progress of the royal funeral, from Grantham to Westminster. At the end of every stage the royal bier rested, surrounded by its attendants, in some central part of a great town, till the neighbouring ecclesiastics came to meet it in solemn procession, and placed it before the high altar of the principal church. At every one of these resting-places the royal mourner vowed to erect a cross, in memory of the *chère reine*, as he passionately called his lost Eleanora. Thirteen of these splendid monuments of his affections once existed: those of Northampton and Waltham <sup>2</sup> still remain models of architectural beauty. The principal citizens of London, with their magistrates, came several miles on the north road, clad in black hoods and mourning cloaks, to meet the royal corpse and join the solemn procession. The hearse rested, previously to its admission into Westminster Abbey, at the spot now occupied by the statue of Charles I., which commanded a grand view of the abbey, the hall, and palace of Westminster.

They buried queen Eleanora at the feet of her father-in-law. Her elegant statue, reclining on an altar-shaped tomb, was cast in bronze by an artist patronised by Henry III. and Edward I. He was supposed to be the celebrated Pietro Cavallini, but his name is now certified as Torelli, <sup>3</sup> otherwise called Master William, the Florentine. He built his furnace, to cast the queen's statue, in St. Margaret's churchyard. The munificent Edward paid Torelli £1700 <sup>4</sup> for his elegant statue of the lost Eleanora. It is well worth it, for he produced a work of which any modern artist might be justly proud. We feel, while gazing upon it, that it possesses all the reality of individual resemblance. The countenance of Eleanora is serenely smiling; the delicate features are perfect, both in form and expression. The right hand held a sceptre, now broken away; the left is closed over something pendent from the neck by a string, supposed to be a crucifix. Her head is crowned with a magnificent circlet, from which her hair falls in elegant waves on her

<sup>1</sup> Walsingham and Speed.

<sup>2</sup> Waltham Cross was built where Eleanora's corpse turned from the high north road, to rest for the night at Waltham Abbey, which is situated about a mile from the spot.

<sup>3</sup> See the accounts of the executors of Eleanora of Castille, edited by B. Botfield, Esq., Roxburghe Club, published since the second impression of this biography, from which the author is glad to rectify the error into which Walpole and Pennant had led her.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

shoulders. The queen of Edward I. must have been a model of feminine beauty. No wonder that the united influence of loveliness, virtue, and sweet temper, should have inspired in the heart of her renowned lord an attachment so deep and true.

The king endowed the abbey of Westminster with many rich gifts, for dirges and masses, to commemorate his beloved queen. Wax-lights perpetually burnt around her tomb, till the Reformation extinguished them, three hundred years afterwards, and took away the funds that kept them alight. "She hath," says Fabian, "two wax tapers burning upon her tomb both day and night, which hath so continued *syn* the day of her burying to this present."<sup>1</sup>

The tomb itself is of grey Petworth marble, and is designed in a style corresponding with the rich memorial cross of Waltham, especially the lower range of shields, on which are seen embossed the towers of Castille and the purple lions of Leon, with the bendlets of Ponthieu. Round the metal table on which the statue reposes is a verge, embossed with Saxon characters, to this effect:—"Here lies Alianor, wife to king Edward, formerly queen of England, on whose soul God for pity have grace. Amen." This is at present the sole epitaph of Eleanora of Castille; but, before the Reformation, a tablet hung near the tomb, on which were some funeral verses in Latin, with an English translation by some ancient rhymester,<sup>2</sup> transcribed here, not for their beauty, but their historical character.

"Queen Eleanora is here interred,  
A royal virtuous dame,  
Sister unto the Spanish king,  
Of ancient blood and fame;  
King Edward's wife, first of that name,  
And prince of Wales by right,  
Whose father Henry just the third  
Was sure an English wight.  
He craved her wife unto his son.  
The prince himself did goe  
On that embassage luckily,  
Himself with many moe,  
This knot of linked marriage

The king Alphonso liked,  
And with his sister and this prince  
The marriage up was striked.  
The dowry rich and royal was  
For such a prince most meet;  
For Ponthieu was the marriage gift,  
A dowry rich and great,  
A woman both in counsel wise,  
Religious, fruitful, meek,  
Who did increase her husband's friends,  
And 'larged his honour eke,  
Learn to die.

Of all the crosses raised to the memory of Eleanora of Castille by

<sup>1</sup>The tomb of Henry III. is richly inlaid with curious and precious stones, which his son, Edward I. brought with him from Syria for that purpose. Its splendour may be noticed by those who walk in the abbey beneath St. Edward's chapel. Fortunately most of this beautiful mosaic of curious stones is perfect on the outside of the chapel, which is placed at an inconvenient height for the operations of the pickers and stealers who daily visit that stately fane; therefore this memento of our great king's filial piety still remains in a tolerable state of preservation. "Edward I. reserved some of his precious store to adorn the statue of his beloved wife, for round the neck are cusps, where a carcanet has been fixed, but it has been wrenched off and stolen."—*Pennant*.

<sup>2</sup>A tradition is extant, that Skelton (whom we are loath to call a poet, though Poet Laureate to Henry VIII.) translated the Latin epitaphs into English, while he was a sanctuary-man, under the protection of Abbot Islip, who had them hung on tablets near the tombs.—*Bayley's Historical Perambulator*.

her sorrowing widower, that of Charing is the most frequently named by the inhabitants of the metropolis, although the structure itself has vanished from the face of the earth. Yet every time Charing Cross is mentioned, a tribute is paid unconsciously to the virtues of Edward I.'s beloved queen, for the appellation is derived from the king's own lips, who always spoke of her in his French dialect as the *chère reine*. Thus the words Charing Cross signify, the "dear queen's cross,"<sup>1</sup> an object that was always seen by the royal widower in his egress and regress from his palace of Westminster. This anecdote is corroborated by Edward's personal habits, who certainly, like his ancestors, spoke French in his familiar intercourse.<sup>2</sup> Our sovereigns had not yet adopted English as their mother tongue. Although Edward and his father spoke English readily, yet their conversation in domestic life was chiefly carried on in French.

Foreigner as she was, Eleanora of Castille entirely won the love and good-will of her subjects. Walsingham thus sums up her character:<sup>3</sup> "To our nation she was a loving mother, the column and pillar of the whole realm; therefore, to her glory, the king her husband caused all those famous trophies to be erected, wherever her noble corse did rest; for he loved her above all earthly creatures. She was a godly, modest, and merciful princess: the English nation in her time was not harassed by foreigners, nor the country people by the purveyors of the crown. The sorrow-stricken she consoled as became her dignity, and she made them friends that were at discord."

Civilization made rapid advances under the auspices of a court, so well regulated as that of Eleanora of Castille. Wales, in particular, emerged from its state of barbarism in some degree. The manners of the Welsh were so savage, at the time when Eleanora kept her court in North Wales, that her royal lord was forced to revive an ancient Welsh law, threatening severe punishments to any one "who should strike the queen, or snatch any thing out of her hand." The English had little reason to pride themselves on their superiority. Although there was no danger of their beating the queen in her hall of state, they had pelted her predecessor from London Bridge. Moreover, in the commencement

<sup>1</sup> Melcolt's *Londinium Rediviva*. In the accounts published by Botfield of Eleanora of Castille's executors, the progress of this cross is repeatedly mentioned as *Crucem de la Char Rynge*. It is possible that the word Charing may have come from the car or char-ring, being the drive where the carriages or cars of those visiting at the palace, drove round while waiting for their owners.

<sup>2</sup> Holinshed.

<sup>3</sup> The common people have not dealt so justly by her; the name of this virtuous woman and excellent queen is only known by them to be slandered by means of a popular ballad, called "A Warning against Pride, being the Fall of Queen Eleanora, Wife to Edward I. of England, who for her pride sank into the earth at Queenhithe, and rose again at Charing Cross, after killing the lady mayoress." Some faint traces of the quarrels between the city of London and Eleanora of Provence regarding Queenhithe, had been heard by the writer of this ballad, who confounded her with her daughter-in-law, whose name was connected with Charing Cross.



of the reign of Edward I., London was so ill-governed, that murders were committed in the streets in noon-day.<sup>1</sup>

Sculpture, architecture, and casting in brass and bronze, were not only encouraged by king Edward and his queen, but brought to great perfection by Torelli, and native artists whom they encouraged in this country. Carving in wood, an art purely English, now richly decorated both ecclesiastical and domestic structures.

Eleanora of Castille first introduced the use of tapestry as hangings for walls. It was a fashion appertaining to Moorish luxury, adopted by the Spaniards. The coldness of our climate must have made it indispensable to the fair daughter of the South, chilled with the damp stone-walls of English Gothic halls and chambers. In the preceding centuries, tapestry was solely worked to decorate altars, or to be displayed as pictorial exhibitions, in solemn commemoration of great events, like the Bayeux tapestry of Matilda of Flanders.

The robes worn by the court of Eleanora of Castille were graceful; the close under-gown, or kirtle, was made high in the neck, with tight sleeves, and a train, over which an elegant robe, with full fur sleeves, was worn. The ugly gorget, an imitation of the helmets of the knights, executed in white cambric or lawn, out of which was cut a visor for the face to peep through, deformed the head-tire of some of the ladies of her court, and is to be seen on the effigy (otherwise most elegant) of Aveline countess of Lancaster, her sister-in-law. But Eleanora had a better taste in dress; no gorget hides her beautiful throat and fine shoulders, but her ringlets flow on each side of her face, and fall on her neck from under the regal diadem. The ladies of Spain are celebrated for the beauty of their hair, and we see by her statues that Eleanora did not conceal her tresses. The elegance and simplicity of the dress adopted by this lovely queen, might form a model for female costume in any era.<sup>2</sup>

There is little more than tradition to support the assertion, that to Eleanora of Castille England owes the introduction of the famous breed of sheep for which Cotswold has been so famous. A few of these creatures were introduced, by the care of the patriotic queen, from her native Spain; and they had increased to that degree in about half a century, that their wool became the staple riches of England.

The last time the name of Eleanora of Castille appears in our national records, is in the Parliamentary Rolls, and from Norman French we translate the following supplication:—"The executors of Oliver de Ingram pray to recover before the king's auditors three hundred and fifty

<sup>1</sup> The vigorous government of Edward soon crushed these evils. He made it penal by proclamation for any person, but the great lords, to be seen in London streets with either spear or buckler, after the parson of St. Martin's-le-Grand had rung out his curfew bell, a proof that the curfew was rung as late as the time of Edward I. It had become an instrument of civil police, rather than military despotism. The highways, on which we have seen Henry III. and his queer robbed in open day, were now cleared of all wood excepting high trees, for forty feet on each side. The first clock in England was set up in a clock-tower, opposite to Westminster Palace.—Stow.

<sup>2</sup> Pennant.

marks, owed by Dame Alianora, late queen and companion to our lord king Edward I., and the said executors show that though our lord the king had given command to have it paid, it is not yet done; therefore they humbly crave that he will be pleased to give a new order for that same, on account of the health of the soul of the said queen Alianora, his companion."

By this document we learn from the best authority, that creditors, in the times when catholicism was prevalent, considered they kept a detaining hold, on the souls, even, of royal debtors.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, in the same parliament, the poor prioress and her nuns of St. Helen present a pathetic petition to the king, representing "how earnestly they have prayed for the soul of madame the queen, late companion to king Edward, and they hope for perpetual alms for the sustenance of their poor convent in London, in consideration of the pains they have taken."<sup>2</sup>

Eleanor of Castille left seven living daughters and one son. Only four of her daughters were married.

Isabella,<sup>3</sup> the sixth daughter of king Edward and Eleanor of Castille, was married at Ipswich (the year before her father's wedlock with Marguerite of France) to the count of Holland. It is doubtful if the young countess ever left England, for two years afterwards her lord died, and she was left a widow, childless. She afterwards married the earl of Hereford, Humphrey de Bohun. Another entry mentions the birth of her first child.

October 30, 1303. To Robert le Norreys, servant to the lady Isabella countess of Hereford, the king's daughter, for bringing news to the prince (of Wales) of the birth of her first son, £26 13s. 4d.

The princess-royal married, after the death of her mother, the duke of Barr. The king paid Husso de Thornville, valet of the count of Barr, for bringing him news of the birth of her eldest son, the enormous sum of fifty pounds! But this boy was the next heir to England after Edward of Caernarvon, as Edward I. settled the succession on the daughters of Eleanor of Castille; first on the countess of Barr and her progeny,

<sup>1</sup> Without needing such stimulus, and solely prompted by family honour and a feeling of integrity, we have seen our young queen pay the debts of a father whom she never knew—a line of conduct in early youth which is, we trust, duly appreciated by her country. Long after this sublunary scene has closed upon her glories of regality, the biographers of succeeding centuries will remember with praise this action of the then maiden sovereign of Great Britain.

<sup>2</sup> Folio 1, Par. Rolls, 475.

<sup>3</sup> The entries in the household book of Edward I., 1298, preserve some of the particulars of this marriage. "To Maud *Makejoy*, for dancing before Edward, prince of Wales, in the King's Hall at Ipswich, two shillings. To sir Peter Champrent, in lieu of the bridal bed of the countess of Holland, the king's daughter, which he ought to have had as his fee when she married the earl of Holland at Ipswich, twenty marks. To Reginald Page—to John the *Vidulator* and Fitz-Simon, minstrels, for making minstrelsy, the day of the marriage of the king's daughter, the countess of Holland, fifty shillings each."

then on Joanna of Acre, and all the seven princesses then alive, in succession.

Edward I. survived most of his beloved Eleanora's children. Joanna of Acre died soon after her father. The countess of Barr preceded him to the tomb soon after the birth of her second son, in 1298, and the countess of Hereford survived him but four years.

The nun-princess, and the unfortunate Edward II., were the only individuals that reached the term of middle life, out of the numerous family that Edward I. had by Eleanora of Castille.

# MARGUERITE OF FRANCE,

## SECOND QUEEN OF EDWARD I.

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the family of Marguerite—Disconsolate widowhood of Edward I.—Demands Marguerite's sister—Blanche la Belle—Edward contracted to Marguerite—Espousals—Maids of honour—Edward leaves his bride for the Scotch war—Queen follows Edward—Lives at Brotherton—Eldest son born there—Left at Cawood—Queen goes to Scotland—Danger of journey owing to Wallace—Her court at Dunfermline—High festival at Westminster Palace—Marguerite's gold circlet—Birth of the queen's second son—Queen's kindness—Robert Bruce's crown—Queen saves a goldsmith's life—Benevolence to the mayor of Winchester—Residence at Winchester—Death of king Edward—Happy wedlock of Marguerite—Her good qualities—Her historiographer John o' London—His sketch of Edward's character—Anecdotes of Edward—Marguerite's visit to France—Friendship with her son-in-law—Widowhood—Early death—Burial—Charities—Foundations—Debts—Children—Present descendants.

THE early death of the brave son and successor of St. Louis, king Philip le Hardi, left his youngest daughter, the princess Marguerite, fatherless at a very tender age. She was brought up under the guardianship of her brother, Philip le Bel, and carefully educated by her mother, queen Marie, a learned and virtuous princess, to whom Joinville dedicated his immortal memoirs.<sup>1</sup> Marguerite early showed indications of the same piety and innate goodness of heart which, notwithstanding some superfluity of devotion, really distinguished the character of her grandfather.

If Marguerite of France possessed any comeliness of person, her claims to beauty were wholly overlooked by contemporaries, who surveyed with admiration the exquisite persons of her elder brother and sister, and surnamed them, by common consent, Philip le Bel and Blanche la Belle. The eldest princess of France was full six years older than Marguerite,<sup>2</sup> and was withal the reigning beauty of Europe, when Edward I. was rendered the most disconsolate of widowers, by the death of Eleanor of Castille. If an historian may be believed, who is so completely a contemporary that he ceased to write before the second Edward ceased to reign, Marguerite was substituted, in a marriage-treaty, commenced by Edward for the beautiful Blanche, by a diplomatic manœuvre, unequalled for craft since the days of Leah and Rachel.

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<sup>1</sup> Of the Life of St. Louis.

<sup>2</sup> See Piers of Langtoft, corroborated by Speed's calculation of the age of Marguerite. As the most extraordinary blunders have been made by an author who has endeavoured to write this memoir, the point deserves attention.

It has been seen that grief in the energetic mind of Edward I. assumed the character of intense activity; but after all was done that human ingenuity could contrive, or that the gorgeous ceremonials of the Roman church could devise, of funeral honours to the memory of the *chère reine*, his beloved Eleanora, the warlike king of England sank into a morbid state of melancholy. His contemporary chronicler emphatically says—

“His solace all was rest sith she was from him gone.  
On fell things he thought, and waxed heavy as lead,  
For sadness him o’ermastered since Eleanor was dead.”

A more forlorn widowerhood no pen can portray than is thus described by the monk Piers.

It is exceedingly curious to observe how anxious Edward was, to ascertain the qualifications of the princess Blanche. His ambassadors were commanded to give a minute description not only of her face and manners, but of the turn of her waist, the form of her foot and of her hand; likewise *sa façon*, perhaps dress and demeanour.

The result of this inquisition was, that Blanche was perfectly lovely, for *ne plus bel creature nul trouve*. Moreover, sire Edward, at his mature age, became violently in love (from report) of the charms of Blanche la Belle. The royal pair began to correspond, and the damsel admonished him by letter, that he must in all things submit to her brother, king Philip. In truth, the extreme wish of king Edward to be again united in wedlock with a fair and loving queen induced him to comply with conditions too hard, even for a young bride to exact, who had a hand, a waist, and a foot perfect as those possessed by Blanche la Belle. Philip demanded that Gascony should be given up by Edward for ever, as a settlement on any posterity Edward might have by his beautiful sister. To this our king agreed; but when he surrendered the province, according to the feudal tenure,<sup>2</sup> to his suzerain, the treacherous Philip refused to give it up, or let him marry his beautiful sister; and just at this time the name of Marguerite, the youngest sister of Blanche, a child of little more than eleven years of age, is found in the marriage treaty between England and France.

The consternation of the king’s brother, Edmund of Lancaster, when he found the villanous part Philip le Bel meant to play, in the detention of the duchy of Guienne, is very apparent. His letter to his brother assumes so much the style of familiar correspondence, that it is to be

<sup>1</sup> Piers of Langtoft.

<sup>2</sup> This ceremony, as narrated by Piers, is exceedingly like the surrender of a modern copyhold.

Edward without reserve  
Sal give Philip the king  
The whole of Gascony,  
Without disturbing  
After the forty days  
Holding that feofment  
Philip without delays

*Sal give back the tenement*  
To Edward and to Blanche,  
And the heirs that of them come.  
To that ilk *scrite*  
Edward set his seal  
That the gift was perfect,  
And with witnesses leal.

regretted that the limits of this work will not permit the entire insertion of the document.

"After," says earl Edmund, "my lord and brother had surrendered, for the peace of Christendom, this territory of Gascony to the will of France, king Philip assured me, by word of mouth, that he would agree to the aforesaid terms; and he came into my chamber, where the queen my wife<sup>1</sup> was, with monsieur Hugh de Vere, and master John de Lacy, and he brought with him the duke of Burgundy, and there he promised, according to the faith of loyal kings, that, in reality, all things should be as we supposed. And on this faith we sent master John de Lacy to Gascony, in order to render up to the people of the king of France the *seisin* of the land, as afore agreed. And the king sent the constable of France to receive it. And when these things were done, we came to the two queens,<sup>2</sup> and they prayed the king of France that he would forthwith give safe conduct to my lord the king, to come and receive again his land and fortresses according to his covenant. And the king of France, in secret, in the presence of queen Jane, told me he was grieved that he must return a hard answer before the council, but nevertheless he meant to fulfil all he had undertaken. And forthwith he declared before his said council 'that he never meant to restore the territory of which he had just been given full *seisin*.'"

Earl Edmund evidently concludes his letter in a great fright, lest Philip le Bel should persist in his cheating line of conduct; but he makes a serious exhortation to his brother, not to let *small* causes break the compact. His letter is accompanied by a treaty of marriage, in which is inserted, not the name of the beautiful princess Blanche, but that of the child Marguerite. A fierce war immediately ensued, lasting from 1294 to 1298, during which time Edward, who at sixty had no time to lose, was left half married to Blanche; for, according to Piers of Langtoft, who seems intimately acquainted with this curious piece of secret history, the pope's dispensation had already been completed.<sup>3</sup>

It was not till the year 1298 that any pacific arrangement took place, between Edward and the brother of Blanche. The treaty was then renewed for Marguerite, who had grown up in the meantime. The whole arrangement was referred to the arbitration of the pope, who decreed "that Guienne was to be restored to the right owner; that Edward I. should marry Marguerite, and that she should be paid the portion of fifteen thousand pounds left her by king Philip le Hardi, her father." This sum, Piers verily believes, Philip le Bel meant to appropriate to his own use.

Piers does not say why the younger sister was substituted instead of

<sup>1</sup> The dowager of Navarre, queen Blanche, mother to Jane, wife of the king of France, was married to Edmund of Lancaster.

<sup>2</sup> The queen of France and her mother, queen Blanche, wife of Lancaster.

<sup>3</sup> The facts stated by Piers are most satisfactorily confirmed by Wikes. Likewise by the learned researches of sir Harris Nicolas; see a Latin poem preserved in the city archives, Chronicle of London, p. 132.

Blanche,<sup>1</sup> but he seems to insinuate in these lines that she was the better character:—

Not dame Blanche the sweet,  
Of whom I now spake,

But dame Marguerite  
Good withouten lack.

Marguerite was married to Edward, who met her at Canterbury, by Robert de Winchelsea, September 8th, 1299, when she was in her seventeenth year.

Among "the folk of good array," sent by Philip for the accommodation of the May, his sister,<sup>2</sup> we find by the wardrobe-book of Edward I. that there were three ladies of the bed-chamber, and four noble demoiselles, or maids of honour. Among these attendants are two French, as Agnes de la Croise, to whom was paid 10 marks; and Matilde de Val, 100 shillings. Two ladies were sent from England to wait on the young queen; these were the lady Vaux and the lady Joanna Fountayne; each received 10*l*. Our chroniclers speak much of the goodness of Marguerite of France, and she seems to have deserved the respect and affection of her royal lord. At the time of her marriage with the king of England, her niece, the young daughter of king Philip, was solemnly betrothed to her son-in-law Edward.

"Now," says a Latin poem<sup>3</sup> descriptive of the Scottish war, "the king returns that he may marry queen Marguerite the flower of France. When love buds between great princes it drives away bitter sobs from their subjects." The stormy aspect of the times did not afford the royal bridegroom leisure to attend to the coronation of Marguerite. King Edward had very little time to devote to his bride; for, to his great indignation, all his barons, taking the opportunity of his absence, thought proper to disband themselves, and disperse their feudatory militia, leaving their warlike king but the shadow of an army, to pursue the advantages he had gained by the sanguinary battle of Falkirk.<sup>4</sup> In less than a week the royal bridegroom departed with fiery speed to crush, if

<sup>1</sup> It was because the beautiful Blanche had the prospect of being empress. Blanche, daughter of Philip le Hardi, and sister to Philip le Bel, married Rodolphus duke of Austria, eldest son to the emperor Albert I. Her husband was afterwards king of Bohemia. This marriage was arranged between king Philip and Albert. The young lady, who had accompanied her brother, was betrothed at Toul, in Lorraine, in the spring of 1299.—*Du Fresno's Notes to Memoirs of the Prince de Joinville*.

<sup>2</sup> Philip for that May  
Made Providence ready;

With folk of good array  
To Dover came she.

In the king's household book there is a present of two hundred marks to the valet of the king's chamber, Edmund de Cornwall, on occasion of the king's marriage with Marguerite of France.

<sup>3</sup> Song of the Scottish Wars. Political Songs of England, Camden Society, 178.

<sup>4</sup> It was at this juncture that Robert Bruce first manifested some sensibility for the woes of the country whose royal blood he shared. After he finally left the bands of Edward I., he was not able to provide for the retreat of his wife, who was left at the court of the young queen. The lady de Bruce was not ill treated, though she was put under restraint at one of the royal manors; she was allowed three pounds per month for maintenance, and was provided with servants, among whom is specified "one fote-boy, decent and not riotous, to make her

possible, the gallant efforts the Scotch were making for their freedom. He left London the Wednesday after his marriage.

The queen, while her husband was thus engaged, remained in London, and resided chiefly at the Tower. The suite of apartments where the queens of England had previously kept their state at Westminster having been lately destroyed by fire, the royal palace of the Tower was, in fact, the only metropolitan residence at which Marguerite could sojourn.<sup>1</sup> During the summer succeeding the queen's bridal, her court at the Tower was placed almost under quarantine, owing to the breaking out of a pestilence, remarkable for its infectious nature. From the writings of Gaddesden, court physician at this time, we come to the conclusion that this was the small-pox, imported by Edward I.'s crusade from Syria.

After this summer, queen Marguerite spent the principal part of her time, like her predecessor, Eleanora of Castille, following the camp of king Edward: and when the ferocious contest he was carrying on in Scotland made her residence in that kingdom too dangerous, she kept court in one of the northern counties. Edward set out, with his queen and his eldest son, in April 1300, and, taking his route through Lincolnshire, crossed the Humber into Yorkshire, and left the queen at Brotherton; a village on the banks of the Wherfe in Yorkshire. Here that prince was born, from whom the noble family of Howard is directly descended, and in whose right the head of that house bears the honour of earl marshal of England. Marguerite gave birth to prince Thomas on the 1st of June. The queen had made rich offerings to the shrine of Canterbury, previously to the birth of her infant; and she named him Thomas, after the favourite English saint.<sup>2</sup>

"The king bid her not stay,  
But come to the north countrie,  
Unto Brotherton on Wherfe,  
There was she  
Mother of a son, that child hight,  
Thomas.

"When the king heard say  
She had so well *farn*, (fared)

Thither he went away  
To see her and her bairn.

"The queen, with her son,  
At Cawood leaves he,  
And oft he came on Ouse  
Her to y-see."<sup>3</sup>

bed." Her whole retinue consisted of three men, three maids, and three greyhounds. She was allowed withal fish and game, and the fairest house on the manor. All this clemency is accounted for by the fact that Robert Bruce's father had been, in the crusades, the companion in arms and dear friend of king Edward. In a bond still extant for forty pounds lent by Edward to the elder Bruce, the king styles him his beloved bachelor. When Edward advanced in years he grew fiercer, and, forgetting the affections of his youthful days, hanged the younger sons of his old friend, Alexander and Thomas de Bruce. — See *Fæderæ*.

<sup>1</sup> Before Marguerite took up her abode at the Tower, king Edward took the precaution of issuing his royal mandate to the civic authorities, in which, after informing them, "that his beloved companion the queen would shortly sojourn in the Tower of London, he enjoins that no petitioner from the city should presume to approach that spot, lest the person of the queen be endangered by the contagion being brought from the infected air of the city." This order is dated from Carlisle, June 28th. <sup>2</sup> Year Book of Edward I. <sup>3</sup> Piers of Langtoft.



The young queen was stationed at Cawood Castle, a magnificent pile of feudal grandeur, being a country-seat belonging to the archbishopric, seven miles from York. King Edward often came there down the Ouse to see her and her infant. Here Marguerite chiefly abode,<sup>1</sup> till the year 1304. Her husband then considered Scotland subdued from sea to sea, and as completely prostrate as the principality of Wales; upon which he sent for his young queen to behold his triumph, and to keep Christmas at Dunfermline.

Piers of Langtoft declares there was much danger in her journey; for though Scotland was apparently subdued, the woods and highways swarmed with armed men, who would not come in and submit to the conqueror. Thus irreverently does that time-serving historian sing of a hero, whose memory has been embalmed, by the justice of more modern ages. Speaking of the danger of the royal Marguerite's journey to Dunfermline, he says:—

"By that the war was ent (ended),  
Winter was three year,  
To Dunfermline he went,  
For rest will he there.  
For the queen he sent,  
And she did dight her cheer;  
From Cawood she went  
To Dunfermline to fare.

"But the lord of Badenoch,  
Fraser, and Wallace,  
Lived at thieves law,  
And robbed all the ways.  
They had no sustenance  
The war to maintain,  
But lived upon chance,  
And robbed aye between."

Scotland, at the time when queen Marguerite kept her court, the Christmas of 1304, at high Dunfermline,<sup>2</sup> seemed to lie bleeding at the feet of Edward; every fortress had surrendered excepting Stirling Castle, from whose unconquered heights the Royal Lion of Scotland still floated in the national banner.

Marguerite and Edward kept their royal state at Dunfermline until the last fatal wound was supposed to be inflicted on Scotland, by the treacherous capture of Wallace, and the fall of Stirling. Leaving Lord Segrave, commander at Dunfermline, Edward and his queen commenced their celebrated triumphal progress homeward to England. Whether Edward brought Wallace in chains with him in this triumphal progress,<sup>3</sup> cannot be precisely determined, but his cruel execution was the commencement of the high festivities, held by Edward and his young queen at Westminster, to celebrate the conquest of unhappy Scotland.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For seven years, at this juncture, the courts of King's Bench and the Exchequer were held at York, to be near the royal court.—Walsingham.

<sup>2</sup> Among the scanty notices of the residence of the queen's court at Dunfermline, there is in the household book of Edward I. a payment of forty shillings to John, the young son of John the bailiff, as boy bishop in the chapel of Dunfermline, and forty shillings to Nicholas, the valet of the earl of Ulster, for bringing the news of the defeat of Sir Simon Fraser and William Wallace, at Koppesowe, by Latimer, Segrave, and Clifford.

<sup>3</sup> A tradition of Carlisle exists which points out the arch of the castle gateway as the spot where Wallace passed a night manacled in his cart, during his bitter progress through England. This circumstance favours the supposition that he was brought in the royal train, and that room could not be found in the castle to lodge the forlorn prisoner.

<sup>4</sup> We here subjoin the commencement of a song of malignant triumph, sang by

While the atrocious execution of Wallace was perpetrated, queen Marguerite and her court were making preparations for the grandest tournament ever celebrated in England since, as the chroniclers declare, the days of king Arthur's round table. On new-year's day, 1306, this tournament was held at Westminster Palace, where prince Edward received knighthood, and was invested with the principality of Wales; two hundred young nobles were knighted, and two of the king's granddaughters married or betrothed.

The festival of St. John the Baptist, the same year, was likewise kept with grand ceremonial. Among the parliamentary rolls we meet the following memoranda of this event. "Thomas de Frowick, goldsmith of London, prays king Edward for the payment of 22*l.* 10*s.* for a circlet of gold made for Marguerite queen of England, to wear on the feast of St. John the Baptist." This goldsmith had previously made a rich crown for the queen, and by the orders of the king left his bill with John de Cheam and his fellows, who had neglected it, and being injured by the delay, he prays the king, in 1306, "for God's sake and the soul of his father, king Henry, to order payment;" he is answered "that he may take his bill to the King's Exchequer, adding to it the charge for certain cups and vases, which he had likewise made, and the clerk of the Exchequer should pay him 440*l.* in part of his bill. Thus we find that queen Marguerite was provided with a splendid state crown, though she was never crowned; a ceremony prevented by the poverty of the finances. Marguerite is the first queen, since the conquest, who was not solemnly crowned and anointed.

Queen Marguerite's beautiful sister, Blanche, duchess of Austria, died towards the close of 1305. Early in the succeeding year, prayers for her soul were commanded by king Edward to be solemnly observed by the archbishop of Canterbury, because "she was the dear sister of his beloved consort, queen Marguerite." The king certainly bore no malice for the perfidy of his former love, doubtless, being convinced that he had changed for the better.

From the royal household-books may be gleaned a few particulars of the English court arrangements at this time. The king's state ship was called, in compliment to the queen, "the Margaret of Westminster;" it does not seem a ship of war, but a sort of royal yacht, in which the king made his voyages, when he went to the continent.

The queen allowed her chief minstrel, who was called Guy of the Psalter, a stipend of 28*s.*; he received *bouche* of court (or board at court), and had the use of three horses when the queen was in progress

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the English, to commemorate the savage and unjust murder of this hero. We only disencumber the lines of their uncouth spelling. It is a specimen of English verse in the year 1305.—From the Harleian MSS., fol. 61, Brit. Museum.

" With fetters and with gyves,  
Wallace was y drawn,  
From the Tower of London,  
That many might know;  
In a kirtle of borrel,\*

Selcouth wise  
Through Chepe,  
And a garland on his head of the  
newest guise.

\* Coarse cloth.

Guy of Psaltery often received gratuities from king Edward, who was, as well as his young queen,<sup>1</sup> a lover of music and the fine arts, and frequently encouraged their professors, as may be seen by these articles of his expenditure:—To Melioro, the harper of Sir John Mautravers, for playing on the harp while the king was bled, 20s.; likewise to Walter Luvel, the harper of Chichester, whom the king found playing on his harp before the tomb of St. Richard, at Chichester cathedral, 6s. 8d. To John, the organist of the earl of Warenne, for playing before the king, 20s.<sup>2</sup>

The queen gave birth at Woodstock, in the thirtieth year of her husband's reign, to her second son, prince Edmund, who was afterwards the unfortunate earl of Kent. About this time "twenty-six pieces of dimity were given out from the king's wardrobe stores to make queen Marguerite a feather bed,<sup>3</sup> and cushions for her charrette."

Instead of finding the national rolls and records burdened with notices of oppressive exactions made by the queen-consort, as in the case of Eleanor of Provence, it is pleasant to observe that Marguerite's charitable kindness pervades these memorials, seen by few, and by still fewer appreciated. In the exchequer rolls exist many requisitions from the queen, ordering that debtors, for fines due to her, may be pardoned their debts, and more than one petition "that debtors of her dear lord the king may have time extended or be excused." One of these royal supplications is curious, and proves that the queen and her two little sons, Thomas and Edmund, prevailed on king Edward to pardon their dear friend, the lady Margaret Howard,<sup>4</sup> a debt owed by that lady to the crown.

As prince Thomas, the eldest son of queen Marguerite, was only six

<sup>1</sup> Household Book of Edw. I., pp. 7—95.

<sup>2</sup> Very different is another entry in the expenses of the music-loving hero. "To seven women meeting the king on the road between Gask and Uggeshall, and singing before him as they had been accustomed to do in the time of king Alexander, 3s." Small in proportion is the benefaction bestowed by the conquering Edward on these Scotch songstresses, who might have sung maledictions on him in their dialect, for aught he knew to the contrary. While music and sculpture had attained some degree of perfection in England at this time, other arts and sciences were in a strange state of barbarous ignorance. The earliest notice of medical practice is to be found, at this era, in the Latin work of Gad-desden, physician at the court of queen Marguerite. This learned doctor, describing his treatment of prince Edward in the small-pox, thus declares his mode of practice: "I ordered the prince to be enveloped in scarlet cloth, and that his bed and all the furniture of his chamber should be of a bright red colour; which practice not only cured him, but prevented his being marked." More by good luck than good management; assuredly, it may be supposed that Gad-desden wished to stare the red inflammation of the small-pox out of countenance, by his glare of scarlet reflections! He adds in his *Rosa Anglorum*, that "he treated the sons of the noblest houses in England with the red system, and made good cures of all." In this childish state was the noble art of healing at the court of Marguerite.

<sup>3</sup> Household Book of Edward I.

<sup>4</sup> The name is spelled *Hercward* in the French; the order was sent by the queen to the barons of the Exchequer. (Madox's History of the Exchequer.) The lady Margare: Howard was a widow, and the debt some copyhold fine.

years old, and the infant Edmund much younger, it may be judged who prompted the young petitioners, and how the queen must have made the caresses of her infants work on the heart of their great father.

"To the honourable father in God, Walter, bishop of Chester, treasurer to our lord, king, and father, Edmund son of the king, salutes in great love. As our dear lady, madame the queen, has required, we would that you would grant to our good friend *ma dame* Marguerite, late wife of Monsieur Robert Hereward, the remission of her debt. Written at Northampton, June 15."<sup>1</sup>

Prince Thomas and the queen each wrote letters to the same effect, that their good friend may be spared her payment to the exchequer.

Marguerite of France is the first instance of a queen consort of England, who ventured to stand between a mighty Plantagenet in his wrath, and his intended victim. We learn, by the statement contained in an act of pardon by Edward I., that Godfrey de Coigners "had committed the heavy transgression and malefaction of making the coronal of gold that crowned the king's rebel and enemy, Robert de Brus, in Scotland, and that he had secretly hidden and retained this coronal till a fitting occasion, but that these treasonable doings had since been discovered and convicted by the king's council." No doubt, Godfrey the goldsmith would have been dealt with, according to the tender mercies shown to Wallace and Fraser, if he had not found a friend in queen Marguerite; "for," says Edward I., "we pardon him solely at the intercession of our dearest consort, Marguerite queen of England."<sup>2</sup>

The citizens of Winchester were likewise deeply indebted to queen Marguerite, whose beneficent interference relieved them from the terrible consequences of king Edward's displeasure. To the mayor of Winchester had been confided the safe keeping of Bernard Pereres; a hostage of some importance, whom the city of Bayonne had delivered to the king, as a pledge of their somewhat doubtful loyalty. Bernard made his escape. On which king Edward sternly commanded his sheriff of Hampshire to seize upon the city of Winchester, and to declare its liberties void; thus reducing the free citizens to the state of feudal villeins. The mayor he loaded with an enormous fine of 300 marks, and incarcerated him in the Marshalsea till it was paid. In despair, the Winchester citizens appealed to the charity of queen Marguerite. She recollected that when she was first married she had been received at Winchester, with the most affectionate demonstrations of loyalty; moreover, she remembered that her husband had given her a charter, which entitled her to all the fines levied from the men of Winchester. Armed with this charter, she went to her loving lord, and claimed the hapless mayor and his fine as her personal property. She then remitted half the fine; took easy security for the remainder, and set the mayor at liberty; nor did she cease pleading with her consort, till he had restored to Winchester the forfeited charters.<sup>3</sup>

During her husband's absence in Scotland, queen Marguerite retired

<sup>1</sup> Folio ii. 1048.

Milner's History of Winchester, from the Trussel MS.

<sup>2</sup> Rymer's Fœdera.

for security to Winchester, where she was deservedly beloved; here she gave birth to a princess—her third, but the king's sixteenth child. The infant was called Eleanora, after Edward's first queen and his eldest daughter, who was deceased at that time. She died in a few months.

Before king Edward reached the Scottish border he fell ill, at Burgh on Sands. He survived a few days, till the prince of Wales came up with the remaining forces, time enough to receive his last commands, which breathed implacable fury against the Scots. The dying warrior, moreover, commanded his son "to be kind to his little brothers Thomas and Edward, and, above all, to treat with respect and tenderness his mother, queen Marguerite." While Edward I. remained unburied, 100*l.* was paid by his treasurer, John de Tunford, for the expenses of the royal widow.<sup>1</sup>

"The *May*, queen Marguerite," was married to Edward in her seventeenth year: notwithstanding the disparity of their ages, they lived happily during a wedlock of eight years. The chroniclers of England record no fault or folly of queen Marguerite; nothing exists to contradict the assertion of Piers, that she was "good withouten lack," and a worthy successor to Eleanora of Castille.

Like Adelicia of Louvaine, the queen of Henry I., Marguerite kept a chronicler to record the actions of her great lord. He was named John o' London, (not a very distinctive appellation;) but as we have given a personal sketch of Edward in his youth, we add a portrait of him, in advanced life, drawn under the superintendence of his royal widow.

"His head spherical; (this is the second instance in which we have found that the chroniclers of the middle ages notice the form of the head;) his eyes round, gentle and dove-like when pleased, but fierce as a lion's, and sparkling with fire, when he was disturbed; his hair crisp, his nose prominent, and raised in the middle; his chest broad, his arms agile, his limbs long, his feet arched, his body firm and fleshy, but not fat. He was so strong and active, that he could leap into his saddle by merely putting his hand on it. Passionately fond of hunting, he was engaged with his dogs and falcons when not in war. He was seldom ill, and neither lost his teeth nor was his sight dimmed with age. He was temperate; never wore his crown after the coronation, thinking it a burden; he went about in the plain garment of a citizen, excepting on days of festival." "What could I do more in royal robes, father, than in this plain gabardine?" said Edward once to a bishop, who remonstrated with him on his attire as unkingly.<sup>2</sup>

How so elegantly proportioned a man as Edward I. came to be surnamed Longshanks has been a question to all writers, since the opening of the stone sarcophagus in Westminster Abbey, when the body of this great warrior and legislator was found of just and fine proportions, without any undue length of legs; his stature was six feet two inches, from skull to heel. It appears that the insulting epithet, Longshanks, was a *sobriquet* given by an incensed enemy, and first took its rise from a satirical song, sung by the Scots, when Edward laid siege to Berwick,

<sup>1</sup> Issue rolls.

<sup>2</sup> Camden's Remains.

being his first step in his ambitious invasion of Scotland.<sup>1</sup> Edward is said to have been so incensed at this song, that when he had stormed Berwick he put every living soul to the sword, to the number of four thousand persons. In this siege he displayed the fine horsemanship for which he was noted.

"What did king Edward?  
Peer he had none like,

Upon his steed Bayard,  
First he won the dike."<sup>2</sup>

Besides this steed Bayard, another called Grey Lyard is celebrated in the barons' wars, as one on which he ever "charged forward;" likewise his horse Ferraunt, "black as a raven, on whose back, though armed in proof, Sire Edward could leap over any chain however high."<sup>3</sup> No chevalier of his day was so renowned for noble horsemanship as this most accomplished monarch. Yet it is certain, that all which finally remained, from his ambitious war in Scotland, was the insulting *sobriquet* of Longshanks.

The original MS. of the queen's chronicler, John o' London, is a great curiosity. It is written in Latin on vellum, very finely and legibly penned, and ornamented with initial letters, illuminated with gold and colours; the centres of the most of these are unfinished, and the manuscript itself is a fragment. The description of Edward's person is accompanied by an odd representation of his face, in the midst of an initial letter. The features bear the same cast as the portraits of the king; there is the small haughty mouth; the severe penetrating eyes, and the long straight nose; the king is meant to be shown in glory, but the head is surrounded with three tiers of most suspicious-looking flames. However, such as it is, it doubtless satisfied the royal widow, to whom the work was dedicated. "The noble and generous matron, Margareta, by the grace of God, queen of England, invites all men to hear these pages." The plan of the oration is to describe the doleful bewailings of all sorts and conditions of persons for the loss of the great Edward. Of course, the lamentation of the royal widow holds a distinguished place in the *commemoratio*. It commences thus: "The lamentable commendation of Margareta, the queen. Hear, ye isles, and attend my people, for is any sorrow like unto my sorrow? Though my head wears a crown, joy is distant from me, and I listen no more to the sound of my cithara<sup>4</sup> and organs. I mourn incessantly, and am weary of my existence. Let all mankind hear the voice of my tribulation, for my desolation on our

<sup>1</sup> "They that were within the toune defended it *orpedly*, (manfully,) and they set on fire king Edward's ships, and sang a scorn.

"What wenith king Edward with his long shanks,  
To win Berwick with all our unthanks,  
Gaes pyke him  
And when he has hit,  
Gaes dike him."

(Additions to Robert of Gloucester.)

<sup>2</sup> Piers Langtoft.

<sup>3</sup> Piers Langtoft. Meaning the chains used in defensive warfare, to guard gates and drawbridges.

<sup>4</sup> Harp.

earth is complete." \* \* \* The queen's chronicler proceeds to paraphrase the lament for Saul and Jonathan; at length he remembers the royal Marguerite by adding, "At the foot of Edward's monument, with my little sons, I weep and call upon him. When Edward died, all men died to me."

These lamentations for a husband more than seventy, from a widow twenty-six, seem a little exaggerated; yet the after-life of the royal Marguerite proved their sincerity.

Although queen Marguerite appeared in public earlier than was usual, for the etiquette of royal widowhood in the fourteenth century, it was in obedience to the dying commands of her royal lord, whose heart was set on a French alliance. Soon after her husband's death she went to Boulogne with her son-in-law, and assisted at his marriage with her niece Isabella.

After she returned to England she lived in retirement, spending her magnificent dower in acts of charity, and in the encouragement of historians and architects. While she lived, her niece, queen Isabella, led a virtuous and respectable life. Marguerite did not survive to see the infamy of this near relative, or the domestic wretchedness of her step-son, with whom she had always lived on terms of affection and amity.

Marguerite is the first queen of England who bore her arms with those of her husband, in one scutcheon; her seal is affixed to the pardon of John de Dalyeng, which pardon she had procured of her son-in-law, in the ninth year of his reign. We trace the life of this beneficent queen-dowager, by her acts of kindness and mercy.<sup>1</sup>

Queen Marguerite's principal residence was Marlborough Castle, on the borders of the forest of Savernake; it was there she died at the early age of thirty-six, on the 14th of February, 1317. King Edward II.'s household-book has the following entry relative to this event. "Sent by the King's order, to be laid upon the body of the lady Marguerite, late queen of England, by the hands of John de Hausted, at Marlborough, the 8th of March, two pieces of Lucca cloth."<sup>2</sup>

Also at the place of its final destination, the Grey Friars, various other pieces of Lucca cloth were to be laid on her body, at the expense of the king. She was buried at the Grey Friars church, the magnificent structure which she had principally founded;<sup>3</sup> her body was buried before the high altar, wrapped in the conventual robe of the Franciscans.

The splendid monument raised to the memory of this beneficent

<sup>1</sup> The seal is of red wax, with the lions of England on the right side, and her own fleur-de-lis on the left. They are emblazoned on a shield, and not on a lozenge.—See *Sandford*, p. 120.

<sup>2</sup> Lucca cloth was an Italian manufacture of silk striped with gold; many other mort-cloths were provided by Edward II., to show his respect for his step-mother's memory. These rich palls were the fees of the officiating priests, at every church where the royal corpse rested on its progress to its place of sepulture.

<sup>3</sup> Stow. She began the choir in 1306, and finished it in her widowhood. She left by her will one hundred marks to this church. This foundation is now Christ Church, Newgate. Part of Marguerite's original building is the cloister of the school.

woman was destroyed by the acquisitiveness of Sir Martin Bowes, lord mayor, in the reign of queen Elizabeth, when the Grey Friars' church was made parochial; he, to the indignation of the antiquary Stow, sold queen Marguerite's tomb and nine others of royal personages, together with a number of grave-stones, for fifty pounds.

Marguerite left her two sons joint executors to her will. Edward II. empowered his dearest brothers, "Thomas earl of Norfolk, earl marshal, and Edmund of Woodstock, co-executors, by the testament of our mother of good memory, Marguerite, late queen of England, to execute the said testament, and to have all goods and chattels that belonged to the said queen; and all her corn on her manors, whether housed or growing green in the earth; from the 14th day of February last, when she died, 1318. They are to receive all debts due to the queen-dowager, and pay what she owes, according to her will."<sup>1</sup> The troubles of the reign of Edward II. prevented the debts of the widow of his father from being paid; as we find the following petition concerning them. In the eighth year of Edward III., there is a petition to Parliament,<sup>2</sup> from Thomas, earl of Norfolk, marshal of England, and executor of the testament of queen Marguerite, his mother, praying, "that the king will please to grant of his good grace, that the debts of the deceased queen may be forthwith paid by his exchequer, according to the order of King Edward II., whom God assoil."

Queen Marguerite is the ancestress of all our English nobility, bearing the great name of Howard; the honours of her son Thomas Plantagenet, earl marshal, were carried into this family, by his descendant, lady Margaret Mowbray, marrying Sir Robert Howard. The Howards,<sup>3</sup> through this queen, unite the blood of St. Louis with that of the mightiest of the Plantagenet monarchs. The heiress of her second son, Edmund earl of Kent, married first Sir Thomas Holland, and then Edward the black prince: through her this queen was ancestress of the nobility who bore the name of Holland; which family became extinct in the wars of the Roses.

<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary Rolls.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Some of the most illustrious characters among the English nobility, both as literati and warriors, have belonged to this family. Six distinct branches of the ducal family of Howard, descendants of queen Marguerite and Edward I., are still extant. Firstly, the Norfolk line, represented by Bernard Edward, duke of Norfolk. Secondly, the elder line of Suffolk and Berkshire, represented by the Hon. Mrs. Greville Howard, heiress of Castle Rising, Leven's Hall, &c. &c. Thirdly, the younger line of Suffolk, represented by Thomas, earl of Suffolk and Berkshire. Fourthly, the Carlisle line, represented by George, earl of Carlisle. Fifthly, the Corby line, whose representative was Henry Howard, esq., of Corby Castle, author of the Howard Memorials. The patriarch of the Carlisle and Corby branches was the celebrated lord William Howard, surnamed "Belieu Will," grandson of the illustrious earl of Surrey, beheaded by Henry VIII. In the lines of Carlisle and Corby, the literary tastes of their renowned ancestor are revived. Sixthly, the Effingham line, whose representative is Kenneth Alexander, earl of Effingham, the descendant of the admiral who defeated the invincible Armada.



# ISABELLA OF FRANCE,

SURNAMED THE FAIR.

QUEEN OF EDWARD II.

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## CHAPTER I.

Isabella's parentage—Both parents reigning sovereigns—Her portion—Affianced to the prince of Wales—Her great beauty—Her marriage—Nuptial festivities—Sails for England with Edward II.—Summons for ladies to wait on her at Dover—Her wardrobe—Her coronation—Peeresses first summoned thereto—Slight offered to Isabella—Queen's complaints—Revenues—Her popularity—Her jealousy of Gaveston—Civil war—Queen's charity—Mediates peace with barons—Birth of her eldest son—Presents to her servants—Queen goes to France with the king—Return—Obtains amnesty—Conjugal happiness—Birth of her second son—Queen's churching robe—Birth of her eldest daughter—Gifts to queen's nurse and servants—King's grants to Isabella—Her residence at Brotherton—Roger Mortimer—Queen's pilgrimage to Canterbury—Insolence of lady Badlesmere—Indignation of the queen—She excites the civil war—Birth of princess Joanna in the Tower—Queen Isabella's first acquaintance with Mortimer—Her influence with the king—Mortimer's plots—His escape—Queen's jealousy of the Despensers—Deprived of her revenues—Her French servants dismissed—Complaints to her brother—Estrangement of the king—Isabella mediatrix with France.

SINCE the days of the fair and false Elfrida, of Saxon celebrity, no queen of England has left so dark a stain on the annals of female royalty, as the consort of Edward II., Isabella of France. She was the eleventh queen of England from the Norman Conquest, and with the exception of Judith, the consort of Ethelwolph, a princess of higher rank than had ever espoused a king of England. She was the offspring of a marriage between two sovereigns; Philip le Bel, king of France, and Jane, queen of Navarre. Three of her brothers, Louis le Hutin, Philip le Long, and Charles le Bel, successively wore the royal diadem of France.

Isabella was born in the year 1295, and, when but four years old, her name was included in the twofold matrimonial treaty which Geoffrey de Joinville, as the envoy of Edward I., negotiated between that monarch and the princess Marguerite, sister of the king of France, and the prince of Wales, with the princess Isabella his daughter.

By the marriage articles it was covenanted, that Philip le Bel was to give his daughter a portion of eighteen thousand pounds, and that she was to succeed to the dower which Edward I. settled on his bride, the princess Marguerite, her aunt.

A solemn act of betrothment took place at Paris, in the year 1303,<sup>1</sup> when the pope's dispensation for this union was published. The count of Savoy and the earl of Lincoln, as the procurators of Edward prince of Wales, affianced the young princess, on his part, in the presence of her illustrious parents, Philip IV. of France, and Jane, queen of France and Navarre. The lady Isabella received the troth of her future lord, Edward, son of the king of England, from the hand of Pere Gill, the archbishop of Narbonne. It appears that the young princess signified her assent to the marriage, by putting her hand in that of Pere Gill, on condition that all the articles of the treaty were duly performed. She was then nine years old.<sup>2</sup>

Edward I. was so desirous of this alliance, that among his death-bed injunctions to his heir, he charged him, on his blessing, to complete his engagement with Isabella. This was, in truth, the only command of his dying sire to which Edward II. thought proper to render obedience. Such was his haste to comply with a mandate which happened to be in accordance with his own inclination, that before the obsequies of his deceased king and father were performed, he dispatched the bishops of Durham and Norwich, with the earls of Lincoln and Pembroke, to the court of France, to appoint a day for the solemnization of his nuptials.

The report of the personal charms of his intended bride, had indeed made so lively an impression on the mind of Edward II., that he is reproached by the chroniclers of his reign with having lost the kingdom of Scotland, through his impatience to complete his marriage with her.<sup>3</sup> When he was apprised that all the arrangements for his marriage were concluded, though perfectly aware that his recognition, as king of Scotland, depended on his remaining there till the important affairs which required his presence were settled, he treated every consideration of political expediency with lover-like contempt, and hastened to the fulfilment of his contract with the royal beauty. There was the less cause for such unreasonable haste, since the fair Isabella had scarcely completed her thirteenth year at the time of her espousals.

Great preparations were made at Westminster Palace for the reception of the young queen. The royal apartments, which had been burnt down in the preceding reign, and had been rebuilt, were completed and furnished; the gardens were new turfed and trellised, the fish-ponds were drawn and cleaned, and a sort of pier jutting into the Thames, called the Queen's Bridge, was repaired. The royal ship called the Margaret of Westminster, was, with her boats and barges, entirely cleaned and beautified. Various butteries and wardrobes were constructed in the vessel, not only by the command, but according to the device of the king himself, for his expected queen's accommodation.<sup>4</sup> After appointing his recalled favourite, Piers Gaveston, guardian of the realm, Edward sailed, early on Monday morning, January 22, 1308, accompanied by his mother-in-law, queen Marguerite, to meet his bride. He landed at

<sup>1</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. ii. p. 928.

<sup>2</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*.

<sup>3</sup> *Annals of St. Augustin.* Rapin. Walsingham.

<sup>4</sup> *Brayley and Britton's History of the Palace of Westminster*, pp. 114, 116, 117.

Boulogne, where Isabella had already arrived with her royal parents. There king Edward performed homage for Guienne and Ponthieu, to king Philip.

The next day, being the festival of the Conversion of St. Paul, the nuptials of Isabella and her royal bridegroom were celebrated, in the famous cathedral church of Boulogne, with peculiar magnificence. Four sovereigns, and as many queens, graced the bridal with their presence. These were the king and queen of France, the parents of the bride; Marie, queen dowager of France, her grandmother; Louis, king of Navarre, her brother, to whom queen Jane, their mother, had resigned the kingdom she inherited; the king and queen of the Romans, the king of Sicily, and Marguerite, queen dowager of England, Isabella's aunt. The archduke of Austria was also present, and the most numerous assembly of princes and nobility that had ever met together on such an occasion.

The dowry of the bride was provided from the spoils of the hapless Knights Templars, who had been recently tortured, plundered, and murdered, by her father.<sup>1</sup> Like most ill-gotten gains, this money by no means prospered in the spending.

The beauty of the royal pair, whose nuptials were celebrated with this extraordinary splendour, excited the greatest admiration; for the bridegroom was the handsomest prince in Europe, and the precocious charms of the bride had already obtained for her the name of Isabella the Fair.<sup>2</sup> Who of all the royal and gallant company, witnesses of these espousals, could have believed their fatal termination, or deemed that the epithet of She-Wolf of France could ever have been deserved by the bride?

High feasts and tournaments were held for several days after the espousals, at which the nobility of four royal courts assisted. These festivities lasted nearly a fortnight. Edward and Isabella were married on the 25th of January, and on the 7th of February they embarked for England, and landed at Dover the same day. There is, in the *Fœdera*, a copy of the summonses that were sent to Alicia, the wife of Roger Bigod, earl of Norfolk, the countess of Hereford and other noble ladies, by the regent, Piers Gaveston, in the king's name, appointing them to be at Dover on the Sunday after the Purification of the Virgin Mary, to receive the newly-wedded queen, and to attend her on her progress to Westminster.<sup>3</sup>

The king and queen remained at Dover two days, where Piers Gaveston joined them. The moment the king saw him, he flew to him, fell on his neck, and called him "brother;"<sup>4</sup> conduct which greatly displeased the queen and her uncles. From Dover the royal party proceeded to Eltham, where they remained till the preparations were completed for the coronation. Two of Isabella's uncles, Charles count of Valois, and Louis de Clermont, count of Evreux, brothers of Philip le Bel;<sup>5</sup> the duke of Brabant, with the grand chamberlain of France, and many other nobles, came as guests to the coronation. This ceremonial

<sup>1</sup> De la Moor. p. 1. British Museum.

<sup>2</sup> Froisart says, she was one of the greatest beauties in the world.

<sup>3</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

was postponed till Quinquagesima Sunday, February 25th, one month after the nuptials of the king and queen. The royal circular in the *Fœdera*, addressed by king Edward to his nobles, in which "he commands their attendance with their consorts at Westminster, to assist at the coronation solemnity of himself and his consort, Isabella queen of England," is the first royal summons in which the wives of the peers of England are included.<sup>1</sup>

The young queen's outfit was magnificent.<sup>2</sup> She brought with her to England two gold crowns, ornamented with gems, a number of gold and silver drinking vessels, golden spoons, fifty silver porringers, twelve great silver dishes, and twelve smaller ones. Her dresses were made of gold and silver stuff, velvet, and shot taffety. She had six dresses of green cloth from the Douay, six beautifully marbled, and six of rose scarlet, besides many costly furs. As for linen, she had 419 yards for the bath alone; she was likewise endowed with six dozen coifs—probably nightcaps. She brought tapestry for her own chamber, figured in lozenges of gold, with the arms of France, England, and Brabant.

The king of France, on the occasion of his daughter's nuptials, had likewise made his royal son-in-law a profusion of costly presents, such as jewels, rings, and other precious articles, all of which Edward immediately bestowed on his favourite, Piers Gaveston, whose passion for finery was insatiable.<sup>3</sup> Such conduct was peculiarly calculated to excite the displeasure of a young girl, and Isabella naturally resented this improper transfer of her father's munificent gifts, which she regarded as part of her dower, and as heir-looms to her descendants.

The nobles took occasion of the anger manifested by the young queen against the haughty favourite, to signify to their sovereign, that unless Gaveston were banished from the court, they would not attend the approaching coronation. Edward, alarmed at an intimation which he knew amounted to a threat of withholding their oaths of allegiance, promised that everything should be arranged to their satisfaction, at the parliament that was to meet directly after his inauguration.

At the coronation itself, fresh discords were engendered. Thomas, earl of Lancaster, the son of Edward's uncle, Edmund Crouchback, bore Curtana, or the sword of mercy, and Henry of Lancaster, his brother, the royal rod, surmounted with the dove. But the indignation of the nobles exceeded all bounds, when it was found that the king had assigned the envied office of bearing St. Edward's crown to his unpopular favourite, who, on this occasion, was dressed more magnificently than the sovereign himself. This gave such offence to one of the earls of the blood-royal,<sup>4</sup> that nothing but the respect due to the young queen restrained him from slaying him, within the sacred walls of the abbey.

The archbishop of Canterbury being absent from the realm at that

<sup>1</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. iii. p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> MSS. de la Bibliothèque Roi, vol. xxxiv. The amount is stated by M. Raumer, to be 28,179 livres, but the articles enumerated would have cost a great deal more, unless the livres meant pounds sterling.

<sup>3</sup> Mathew of Westminster.

<sup>4</sup> Mills. Carte.

period, the king and queen were consecrated and crowned by the bishop of Winchester.<sup>1</sup>

So great was the concourse of spectators at this coronation, that many serious accidents occurred, through the eager desire of the people to obtain a sight of the beautiful young queen; and a knight, sir John Bakewell, was trodden to death.

Gaveston had taken upon himself the whole management of the coronation ceremonial; and either his arrangements were made with little judgment, or his directions were perversely disobeyed, for it was, from the beginning to the end, a scene of the most provoking confusion and disorder. It was three o'clock before the consecration of the king and queen was over; and when we consider the shortness of the winter days, we cannot wonder at the fact stated, that though there was abundance of provisions of every kind, there was not a morsel served up at the queen's table before dark.<sup>2</sup> The lateness of the dinner-hour appears to have excited the indignation of the hungry nobles, more than any other of Gaveston's misdeeds that day. The banquet was, moreover, badly cooked, and, when at last brought to table, ill served, and few of the usual ceremonies were observed, for the want of the proper officers to oversee and direct. In short, all classes were dissatisfied and out of humour, especially the queen, on whom many slights were put, but whether out of accident or wilful neglect is not stated.<sup>3</sup>

The French princes and nobles returned home, in a state of great exasperation at the affronts which they considered their princess had received; and Isabella herself sent a letter to the king her father, full of complaints of her lord, and his all-powerful favourite, Gaveston.<sup>4</sup> This had the effect of inducing Philip le Bel to strengthen the party of the discontented barons against Gaveston, with all his influence, and gave an excuse to the French party for commencing those intrigues which terminated so fatally at last for Edward II.

King Edward was at that time in great pecuniary distress, having emptied his treasury in gifts to Gaveston, so that he had not wherewithal to pay his coronation expenses, nor to supply his household. As for his young queen, she was wholly without money, which caused her great uneasiness and discontent.

It is possible that if Isabella had been of an age more suitable to that of her husband, and of a less haughty temper, her beauty and talents might have created a counter-influence to that of the Gascon favourite, productive of beneficial effects; but, at the period of his marriage, Edward was in his three-and-twentieth year, and evidently considered a consort who was only entering her teens, as entitled to a very trifling

<sup>1</sup> The king's first offering was a pound of gold, fashioned in the likeness of a king holding a ring in his hand. His second was eight ounces of gold, in the form of a pilgrim putting forth his hand to take the ring, or rather, we should think, to give it, for this device represented the legend of Edward the Confessor receiving the ring from St. John the Evangelist, in Waltham forest, from whence Havering-bower derived its name. This very ring is declared by tradition to be the coronation ring her present majesty received at her inauguration.

<sup>2</sup> Carte

<sup>3</sup> Walsingham.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

degree of attention, either as a queen or a wife. Isabella was, however, perfectly aware of the importance of her position in the English court; and even had she been as childish in mind as she was in age, she was too closely allied in blood to the great leaders of the disaffected peers of England, Thomas earl of Lancaster, and his brother, Henry earl of Derby, to remain quiescently in the back-ground. The mother of the above-named nobles, Blanche of Artois, the queen-dowager of Navarre, was Isabella's maternal grandmother;<sup>1</sup> consequently, the sons of queen Blanche, by her second marriage with Edmund earl of Lancaster, were half-uncles to the young queen, and resolutely determined to act as her champions against Piers Gaveston, who was now allied to the royal family by his marriage with Margaret of Gloucester, the daughter of Edward's sister, Joanna of Acre.<sup>2</sup>

Gaveston was not only the Adonis of the English court, but remarkable for his knightly prowess, graceful manners, and sparkling wit. It was the latter qualification which rendered him peculiarly displeasing to the English nobles, whom he was accustomed to deride and mimic, for the amusement of his thoughtless sovereign; nor was the queen exempted, when he was disposed to display his sarcastic powers.<sup>3</sup> The sins of the tongue are those which more frequently provoke a deadly vengeance than any other offence; and Gaveston's greatest crime appears to have been the fatal propensity of saying unforgivable things in sport. Isabella's father secretly incited the English barons to a combination against Gaveston, which compelled the king to promise to send him beyond seas. This engagement Edward deceitfully performed, by making him viceroy of Ireland, which country, his worst enemies own, he ruled with great ability.

The queen's pecuniary distresses were then brought before the lords,<sup>4</sup> and as they found there was no money in the treasury, to furnish her with an income befitting her station, the revenues of the county of Ponthieu and Montrieul, the inheritance of the king's mother, were appropriated to her use. The king specified as his wish, "that his dearest consort, Isabella queen of England, shall be honourably and decently provided with all things necessary for her chamber; and all expenses for jewels, gifts, and every other requisite."<sup>5</sup>

During the first year of Isabella's marriage with Edward II., her father, Philip le Bel of France, appears to have acquired some degree of ascendancy in the councils of the nation, for we observe several letters

<sup>1</sup> Miles' Catalogue of Honour. Brookes, Speed, &c. &c.

<sup>2</sup> The barons were exasperated at this marriage, which made the favourite Edward's nephew; yet the earl of Gloucester, who was certainly the person whom it more nearly concerned, as he was the young lady's brother, appeared perfectly satisfied, and remained Gaveston's firm friend; and it is more than probable that the lady herself was quite agreeable to the union.

Walsingham.

<sup>4</sup> Carte.

<sup>5</sup> "Therefore he is pleased to assign the lands of Ponthieu, &c., for her use, to provide her with such things; and he directs Richard de Rokeslie, his seneschal of that province, to give the deputies of the queen peaceful possession of the demesnes." *Fœdera*, vol. iii., May 14th, 1380.

in Rymer's *Fœdera*, from Edward to his father-in-law, in which he condescends to explain his conduct with regard to Gaveston to that monarch, and weakly solicits his mediation with his turbulent barons.

The following year Gaveston took occasion to return to England, to attend a tournament at Wallingford.<sup>1</sup> The magnificence of his retinue, and the great number of foreigners by whom he was surrounded, served to increase the jealous displeasure of the barons. Gaveston, according to his old practice, retaliated their hostility with scornful railery, and on this occasion bestowed provoking *sobriquets* on the leaders of the feud against him. The earl of Pembroke, who was dark, thin, and sallow-complexioned, he called "Joseph the Jew;" the earl of Warwick, who foamed at the mouth when angry, "the wild boar of Ardenne;" and the earl of Lancaster, from his affecting a picturesque style of dress, "the stage player;"<sup>2</sup> and in like manner he characterized the rest of the party, either from their peculiarities or defects. These insults were not only treasured up against a fearful day of reckoning, but had the effect of stirring up such a storm in the court, as made the throne of his royal master totter under him.

The queen, her uncle the earl of Lancaster, and all the baronage of England, made common cause against Gaveston; and Edward, not daring to oppose so potent a combination, dismissed his favourite to Guienne. At parting, the king lavished on Gaveston all the jewels of which he was possessed, even to the rings, brooches, buckles, and other trinkets, which his young and lovely consort had at various times presented to him as tokens of regard. Nothing could be a greater proof of folly than such a proceeding, which was sure to create feelings of grief or resentment, in the bosom of a high-spirited girl of fifteen.<sup>3</sup>

Queen Isabella was at that time much beloved by the nation, and we hear no more of her complaints of conjugal infelicity, till the year 1312, when, to her great displeasure, as well as that of the nobles, the king recalled Gaveston, and made him his principal secretary of state.<sup>4</sup>

All the affairs of the realm were under his control, and no one could obtain access to the sovereign except through him; he was accused withal of leading the king into a reckless course of dissipation, very offensive and injurious to the queen.

Isabella, not being of a temper to bear her wrongs in silence, angrily remonstrated with Gaveston; on which he so far forgot the respect due

<sup>1</sup> Walsingham.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Walsingham.

<sup>3</sup> Edward's want of judgment was equally perceptible in all his actions; his thoughtless profusion had been the means of involving him in pecuniary embarrassments, so that he was compelled to send precepts to such as had the custody of his manors, to raise and borrow all the money they could for the expenses of his household. When these expedients failed, his affairs were brought before his parliament in 1310. His misconduct was highly censured, and a sort of reform commission was appointed, to restrain his lavish expenditure, and to compel him to apply his income to the payment of his debts and the maintenance of his household, and otherwise to circumscribe his authority for the space of one year. The commissioners consisted of seven bishops, eight earls, and six barons, who were called ordainers.—*Walsingham. Brady.*

<sup>4</sup> Walsingham. Rapin.

to her high rank, as to make a contemptuous reply; and when she passionately complained to the king of the affront she had received from his insolent favourite, Edward treated it as a matter of little importance. It appears evident that, at this period, Isabella was only considered by him as a petulant child.<sup>1</sup> Less perilous, however, would it have been to offer slights and provocations to a princess of more advanced age and mature judgment; for Isabella vented her indignant feelings, by sending an eloquent detail of her wrongs to her father the king of France, to whom she wrote bitter complaints of her royal husband's coldness and neglect, describing herself "as the most wretched of wives, and accusing Gaveston of being the cause of all her troubles, by alienating king Edward's affection from her, and leading him into improper company."

King Edward's letters, at the same period, to the father of his queen, are written in the most slavish style of prostration,<sup>2</sup> and he constantly applies to him for counsel and assistance in his internal troubles, apparently unconscious that his "dearest lord and father," as he calls the treacherous Philip, was the secret agitator by whom his rebel peers were incited to disturb his dreams of pleasure.<sup>3</sup>

It is remarkable that Isabella's name is mentioned but once, in Edward's letters to the king her father, and then merely to certify "that she is in good health, and will (God propitious) be fruitful."<sup>4</sup>

It was not, however, till the fifth year of Isabella's marriage with Edward II., that any well-grounded hope existed of her bringing an heir to England; and the period at which this joyful prospect first became apparent was amidst the horrors of civil war.

The earl of Lancaster, at the head of the malcontent barons, took up arms against the sovereign in the year 1312, in order to limit the regal authority, and to compel Edward to dismiss Piers Gaveston from his councils. Isabella accompanied her lord and his favourite to York, and shared their flight to Newcastle; where, not considering either Gaveston or himself safe from the victorious barons, who had entered York in triumph, Edward, in spite of all her tears and passionate entreaties to the contrary, abandoned her, and took shipping with Gaveston for Scarborough.<sup>5</sup> The forsaken queen, on the advance of the confederate barons, retired to Tynemouth. During her residence at Tynemouth Castle, Isabella employed her time in charity and alms-deeds: of this, most interesting evidence appears in the royal household-book for 1312.

"October 9.—To little Thomeline, the Scotch orphan boy, to whom the queen, being moved to charity by his miseries, gave food and raiment to the amount of six and sixpence." But Isabella's good work did not stop with feeding and clothing the poor destitute creature; she provided for the future welfare of little Thomeline, for we find another entry:—

"To the same orphan, on his being sent to London to dwell with Agnes, the wife of Jean, the queen's French organist; for his education, for necessities bought him, and for curing his maladies, fifty-two shillings and eightpence."

<sup>1</sup> Walsingham.

<sup>2</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. iii.

<sup>5</sup> Guthrie.



While the queen remained disconsolate at Tynemouth, Lancaster, who had got possession of Newcastle, sent a deputation to his royal niece, "with assurances of her safety," explaining "that their sole object was to secure the person of the favourite."

The king, meantime, having left Gaveston in the strong fortress of Scarborough,<sup>1</sup> proceeded to levy forces in the midland counties, for his defence. The indignation of the men of the north of England had, however, been so greatly excited at his neglect and desertion of the queen, while in a situation which required more than ordinary sympathy and tenderness, that they rose, *en masse*, to storm her adversary in his shelter; and Gaveston, being destitute of provisions, or the means of standing a siege, surrendered to the confederate lords, on condition of being safely conducted to the king, and allowed free communication with him previously to his trial before the parliament.

In violation of the articles of this treaty, which the earl of Lancaster and the rest of the confederate barons had solemnly sworn to observe, Gaveston was brought to a sham trial, and beheaded at Blacklow-hill, near Warwick, on a spot which, in memory of the tragedy committed there, is called Gaveshead.

The barons enjoyed the extreme satisfaction of ransacking the baggage of the luckless favourite, where they found many of the crown jewels, some articles of gold and silver plate belonging to the king, and a great number of precious ornaments, which had been presented to the king by queen Isabella, his married sisters, and other persons of high rank. There is a minute list of these valuables in Rymer's *Fœdera*, and the catalogue is indeed likely enough to have excited the indignation of the jealous peers, who, on the green hill-side, sat in relentless judgment on the man whom the king delighted to honour.<sup>2</sup>

Notwithstanding her avowed hostility against Gaveston, there is no reason to suppose that Isabella was in the slightest degree implicated in his murder, though his misconduct to her was one of the principal grounds of accusation used by the earl of Lancaster against him.

When Edward received the tidings of the tragic fate of the companion of his childhood, he was transported with rage and grief, and declared his intention of inflicting a deadly vengeance on the perpetrators of the outrage. He sullenly withdrew from London to Canterbury, and finally joined the queen at Windsor, where she was awaiting the birth of their first child.<sup>3</sup>

This auspicious event took place on the 13th day of November, at forty minutes past five in the morning, in the year 1312,<sup>4</sup> when Isabella,

<sup>1</sup> (Guthrie.) Gaveston was taken very ill at Newcastle; for there is an entry in the household-book of Edward II.—"To master William de Bromptoft, a physician, for his attendance on Sir Piers de Gaveston, during his illness at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, two pounds."

<sup>2</sup> Among other frivolous charges that were brought against Gaveston by the associate barons, he was accused of being "the son of a witch," and of having obtained his influence over the mind of his sovereign by the practice of sorcery. His mother had been actually burnt for sorcery in Guienne.

<sup>3</sup> Walsingham.

<sup>4</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*.

then in the eighteenth year of her age, and the fifth of her marriage, brought into the world the long-desired heir of England, afterwards that most renowned of our monarchs, Edward III., surnamed of Windsor, from the place of his birth.

The gloom and sullen sorrow in which the king had been plunged ever since the death of Gaveston, yielded to feelings of paternal rapture at this joyful event, and he testified his approbation, by bestowing on John Lounges, valet to the queen, and Isabel his wife, twenty pounds, and settled the same on them as an annual pension for life.<sup>1</sup>

Scarcely less delighted were Isabella's uncle, the count of Evreux, and the French nobles, who were then sojourning in England, at the birth of the royal infant, who was remarkable for his beauty and vigour. They entreated the king to name the young prince, Louis, after the heir of France, and the count of Evreux; but the idea was not agreeable to the national feelings of the English in general, and it was insisted by the nobles that the new-born heir of England should receive the name of his royal father and his renowned grandfather, Edward. Four days after his birth, he was baptized with great pomp, in the old chapel of St. Edward, in the castle of Windsor.<sup>2</sup>

Isabella's influence, after this happy event, was very considerable with her royal husband, and at this period her conduct was all that was prudent, amiable, and feminine. It was through her mediation that a reconciliation was at length effected between king Edward and his barons,<sup>3</sup> and tranquillity restored to the perturbed realm. Before the amnesty was published, queen Isabella visited Aquitaine, in company with her royal husband; from thence they went to Paris, where they remained at the court of Philip the Fair nearly two months, enjoying the feasts and pageants which the wealthy and magnificent court of France provided for their entertainment. Plays were represented on the occasion, being Mysteries and Moralities for amusement and admonition, entitled, "The Glory of the Blessed, and the Torments of the Damned."

Through the earnest entreaties of the queen, the long-delayed pardon was published by king Edward, October 13th, 1313, without any exceptions; and the royal deed of grace expressly certifies, "that this pardon and remission is granted by the king, through the prayers of his dearest companion, Isabella queen of England."<sup>4</sup> The parliament met amicably, and the barons solemnly made their submission on their knees to the sovereign in Westminster Hall, before all the people.<sup>5</sup> Soon after, the earl of Warwick, the most active agent in the death of Gaveston, dying

<sup>1</sup> Pyne's Royal Palaces.

<sup>2</sup> The ceremony was performed by Arnold, cardinal priest, and the royal babe had no less than seven godfathers; namely, Richard, bishop of Poitiers; John, bishop of Bath and Wells; William, bishop of Worcester; Louis, count of Evreux, uncle to the queen; John, duke of Bretagne and earl of Richmond; Aymer de Valence, earl of Pembroke; and Hugh le de Spencer; but there is not the name of one godmother recorded. A few days after his birth, his fond father granted to his dearly-prized heir, his new and blameless favourite, the county of Chester, to be held by him and his heirs for ever; also the county of Flint. Rymer's Fœdera, vol. iii.

<sup>3</sup> Walsingham.

<sup>4</sup> Rymer's Fœdera.

<sup>5</sup> Walsingham.

suddenly, it was industriously circulated by his friends that he had been taken off by poison. The barons mistrusted the king, and queen Isabella was the only link that kept them from open war.

The year 1314 commenced with active preparations on the part of the king for renewing the war with Scotland.<sup>1</sup> Stirling, so appropriately designated by the chroniclers of that stormy era, *Striveling*, was then besieged by the energetic Bruce, and it was for the relief of that important possession that the laggard heir of the conqueror of Scotland at length crossed the Tweed. He met with a decisive overthrow at Bannockburn. Queen Isabella frequently resided at York and Brotherton, to be near the king during his northern campaign. In the ninth of Edward II. an information was brought before the king's council in the exchequer, against Robert le Messenger, for speaking irreverent or indecent words against the king. He was tried by a jury, and found guilty; for some reason, however, the queen induced the archbishop of Canterbury to become his bail, and on that surety he was released from prison.<sup>2</sup>

In the month of September, 1316, king Edward was joined by his royal consort, queen Isabella, at York, who had remained at Eltham for her confinement, as there is an entry soon after, in the king's household book: "To sir Eubulo de Montibus, for bringing the first news to the king of the happy delivery of queen of her son John of Eltham, £100."

There is likewise a reward to the queen's messenger for announcing the first tidings of the queen's arrival at York, September 27th. The queen sent costly presents to the new pope, John, of copes embroidered with large pearls, bought of Catherine Lincoln, and a cope embroidered by Rosia de Burford. To the same pope queen Isabella sent a present, through don John de Jargemoc, her almoner, of an incense boat, a ewer, and a gold buckle, set with divers pearls and precious stones, value £300.

"The queen sent her valet, Goodwin Hawtaine, with letters to the bishop of Norwich and the earl of Lancaster, requesting them to come to Eltham to stand sponsors for her son John; his travelling expenses were sixteen shillings. John de Fontenoy, clerk of the queen's chapel, received one piece of Turkey cloth, and one of cloth of gold for arraying the font in which the lord John, son of the king, was baptized at Eltham, 30th August; to Stephen Taloise, the queen's tailor, was delivered five pieces of white velvet for the making thereof a certain robe against the churching of the queen, after the birth of her said son."

The birth of the princess Eleanor took place in 1318. The household-book notes the king's gift of £333, "to the lady Isabella, queen of England, for her churching feast, after the birth of the lady Eleanor."

There are likewise notices of money thrown over the heads of

<sup>1</sup> Robert Bruce showed no slight judgment of character when he thus spoke of the contrast between the first Edward of England and the second Edward "I am more afraid of the bones of the father dead, than of the living son; and, by all the saints, it was more difficult to get half a foot of land from the old king, than a whole kingdom from the son."—*Matthew of Westminster*.

<sup>2</sup> Madox.

various brides and bridegrooms, as they stood at the altar—the royal pair were present at their marriages, at Havering Bower, Woodstock, and Windsor—and for money given by the orders of the king, at the chapel doors. Several other entries afford amusing information, respecting the manners and customs of Edward the Second's court. Vanne Ballard, for pieces of silk and gold tissue of fustian, and of flame-coloured silk, for the making cushions, for the charrettes of the queen and her ladies. To Robert le Fermor (the closer), boot-maker, of Fleet-street, for six pairs of boots, with tassels of silk and drops of silver gilt, price of each pair five shillings, bought for the king's use. Griffin, the son of sir Griffin of Wales, was selected as one of the companions of the young prince Edward, afterwards Edward III., at Eltham, by order of the king.

When the king and queen kept Twelfth-night, their presents were magnificent: to the king of the Bean, in one instance, Edward gave a silver gilt ewer, with stand and cover, and another year, a silver gilt bowl to match, as new year's gifts. To William Sal Blaster, valet of the count of Poitiers, bringing to the king bunches of new grapes at Newborough, 28th of October, 10s. Queen Isabella's chaplain was entitled to have the queen's oblatory money, of the value of *seven-pence*, redeemed each day of the year, except on the assumption of the Virgin, when the queen offered gold. To Dulcia Withstaff, mother of Robert, the king's fool, coming to the king at Baldock, at Christmas, ten shillings. To William de Opere, valet of the king of France, for bringing the king a box of rose-coloured sugar at York, on the part of the said king, his gift, September 28th, two pounds ten shillings. To the lady Mary, the king's sister, a nun at Ambresbury, the price of fifteen pieces of tapestry, with divers coats of arms, bought of Richard Horsham, mercer of London, and given to the lady Mary on her departure from court, home to Ambresbury, twenty-six pounds. To sir Nicholas de Becke, sir Humphrey de Luttlebury, and sir Thomas de Latimer, for dragging the king out of bed on Easter morning, Edward paid twenty pounds.<sup>1</sup>

Edward II., in 1316, bestowed a considerable benefaction on Theophania de St. Pierre, his queen's nurse: besides fifty pounds sterling money, he gives this person, whom he calls lady of Bringnencourt, lands in Ponthieu, where queen Isabella was dowered.<sup>2</sup> In the household-books of Thomas Lancaster, Stow found that ninety-two pounds had been presented by that prince to his royal niece's nurses and French servants.

In the twelfth year of his reign, Edward II. granted to his consort Isabella the escuage, belonging to him for the army of Scotland due from the knight's fees, which the queen held by grant for the term of her life.

King Edward's disasters in the north were succeeded by the most

<sup>1</sup> Madox.

<sup>2</sup> Rymer's *Fœdra*, vol. iii.

dreadful famine ever known in England, which lasted for nearly three years.<sup>1</sup>

The king and queen kept their court at Westminster<sup>2</sup> during the Whitsuntide festival of 1317; and on one occasion, as they were dining in public in the great banqueting-hall, a woman in a mask entered on horseback, and riding up to the royal table, delivered a letter to the king. Edward, imagining that it contained some pleasant conceit or elegant compliment, ordered it to be opened and read aloud for the amusement of his courtiers; but to his great mortification it was a cutting satire on his unkingly propensities, setting forth in no measured terms all the calamities which his misgovernment had brought upon England. The woman was immediately taken into custody, and confessed that she had been employed by a certain knight. The knight boldly acknowledged what he had done, and said, "that supposing that the king would read the letter in private, he took that method of apprising him of the complaints of his subjects."<sup>3</sup>

The following year Robert Bruce laid siege to Berwick. Queen Isabella accompanied her lord into the north, and while he advanced to Berwick, she, with her young family, took up her abode at Brotherton, the former residence of her late aunt, queen Margaret. This was a place of apparent security, as it was nearly a hundred miles from the scene of war; yet she was exposed to a very great peril while residing there, in the year 1319, during the absence of the king, in consequence of a daring attempt of earl Douglas to surprise her in her retreat, and carry her off into Scotland. The monk of Malmesbury gives the following account of this adventure: "Douglas marched into England at the head of 10,000 men with great secrecy, and nearly arrived at the village where queen Isabella and her children resided, when one of his scouts fell into the hands of the archbishop of York, the king's councillor, who threatening him with tortures, the man promised him, if they would spare him, to confess the great danger their queen was in. The ministers laughed his intelligence to scorn, till he staked his life that if they sent scouts in the direction he pointed out, they would find Douglas and his host within a few hours' march of the queen's retreat. Alarmed by the proofs given by the man, they collected all their retinue, and all the men-at-arms York could furnish, and marched on a sudden to the queen's residence, with the tidings of her great danger: they brought her off directly to York, and afterwards, for the greater security, she was taken to Nottingham."

<sup>1</sup> King Edward endeavoured to lower the enormous price of provisions by various statutes, but without effect, as the public misery was not caused by monopoly, but by dearth, which was felt even in his own palace; for on St. Lawrence's eve, 1314, it was with difficulty that bread could be procured for the sustentation of the royal family.—*Walsingham. De la Moor.*

<sup>2</sup> The unpopularity of the king at this period tempted an impostor of the name of John Deydras, a tanner's son, to pretend that he was the true son of Edward I., who had been changed by his former nurse for him who so unworthily filled the throne of that mighty sovereign. Deydras, having no evidence to support this assumption, was hanged for his treasonable attempt to excite sedition.—*Walsingham.*

<sup>3</sup> *Walsingham.*

It was in 1321 that the storm gathered among the lord marchers, which led to the barons' wars, and brought Isabella and Roger Mortimer into acquaintance with each other.<sup>1</sup>

We now come to that eventful period when Isabella exchanged the lovely character of a peace-maker for that of a vindictive political agitator, and finally branded her once-honoured name with the foul stains of adultery, treason, and murder. The circumstances which in the first instance led to this fearful climax of guilt were, as far as concerned Isabella, accidental.

On the 13th of October, 1321, the queen set out on a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Thomas à Becket at Canterbury, and proposing to pass the night at her own castle of Leeds, of which Bartholomew Badlesmere, one of the Associated Barons, was castellan, she sent her marshal and purveyors before her to announce her intention, and to order proper arrangements to be made for her reception.<sup>2</sup>

Badlesmere was absent at that time, and being deeply involved in the treasonable designs of the earl of Lancaster, had charged his lady to maintain the castle, though it was a royal demesne, being one of the dower palaces of the queens of England. Lady Badlesmere, feeling some mistrust at the real object of Isabella in demanding admittance for herself and train, replied with great insolence to the royal messengers, "That the queen might seek some other lodging, for she would not admit any one within the castle without an order from her lord."

While the dispute was proceeding between the lady Badlesmere and the purveyors, the queen and her train arrived at the castle gates, and were received with a volley of arrows, which slew six of the royal escort, and compelled the queen to retreat with precipitation, and to seek other shelter for the night.<sup>3</sup>

The queen complained bitterly to the king of the affront she had received, and entreated him to avenge the murder of her servants, and the insolence of lady Badlesmere in presuming to exclude her from her own castle.<sup>4</sup> Badlesmere had the folly to write the most insulting letter to

<sup>1</sup> King Edward had married his new favourite, the young Despencer, to his great-niece Eleanor, one of the co-heiresses of his nephew Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester, who had been the most potent among the lords marchers of Wales, and a sort of lord paramount over them all. The warlike Mortimers, during the long minorities of the two last earls of Gloucester, had taken the lead among the marchers; and now the king's favourite, in right of his wife, assumed a sort of supremacy on the Welsh borders, and prevailed on the king to resume the grants of some of his late nephew's castles which he had given to the Mortimers. Those fierce chiefs flew to arms with their marchmen, and in the course of a few nights harried lady Despencer's inheritance with so hearty a good will, that they did many thousand pounds' worth of mischief. The leaders of this exploit were lord Roger Mortimer of Chirk, and his nephew and heir, lord Roger Mortimer of Wigmore, who had been the ward and pupil of Gaveston. The extraordinary influence of the younger Mortimer exercised over the destiny of the queen requires these few words of explanation as to the origin of this rebellion.

<sup>2</sup> Walsingham. De la Moor.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Leeds Castle was a part of the splendid dower settled by Edward I. on queen Margaret, Isabella's aunt, to which queen Isabella had succeeded.—*Rymer's Fædera*.

the queen, in reply to the complaints that had been addressed to him of his wife's conduct, expressing his entire approval of what she had done. This conduct was aggravated, by the fact, that Badlesmere had very lately been one of the principal officers of the palace, and held the high station of steward to the royal household, before Edward gave him the appointment as castellan of Leeds. The whole transaction implies some previous personal quarrel with the queen. Hitherto the queen had been on the most amicable terms with the barons; but as neither Lancaster nor any of the associates thought proper to express any reprobation of the disrespect with which she had been treated by their confederate, she determined to be revenged on all; and accordingly represented to the king that if he raised an army for the purpose of besieging Leeds Castle, he would eventually be enabled to use it for the extension of his kingly power.<sup>1</sup> The king would willingly have temporized, but the haughty spirit of Isabella would not permit him to delay becoming the minister of her vengeance. Edward published his manifesto, setting forth the contempt with which his beloved consort Isabella queen of England had been treated by the family of Bartholomew Badlesmere, who had insolently opposed her in her desire of entering Leeds Castle, and that the said Bartholomew Badlesmere had by his letters approved of this misconduct of his family, in thus obstructing and contumeliously treating the queen, for which cause a general muster of all persons between the ages of sixteen and sixty was called to attend the king in an expedition against Leeds Castle.<sup>22</sup>

A large force, of which the Londoners formed a considerable portion, was quickly levied, for the queen was the darling of the nation, and all were eager to avenge even the shadow of a wrong that was offered to her.

The lady Badlesmere, who was undoubtedly a notable virago, treated the royal threats with contempt; and, with her seneschal Walter Colepepper, defied both the king and his army, when they appeared beneath the walls of Leeds Castle, which was well stored with provisions, and she confidently relied on receiving prompt relief from the associate barons. In this, however, she was disappointed, for the earl of Lancaster had no intention to come to a rupture with the queen, his niece. The castle of Leeds was in consequence compelled to surrender at discretion on the last day of October.

Immediate vengeance was taken by the king, for the assault on the queen and her servants, on the seneschal, Walter Colepepper, who, with eleven of the garrison, were hanged before the castle gates.<sup>3</sup> Lady Badlesmere was committed to the Tower of London as a state prisoner, and was threatened with the same fate that had been inflicted on her agents: but it does not appear that she suffered any worse punishment than a long and rigorous imprisonment.<sup>4</sup> With all their faults, there is no instance of any monarch of the Plantagenet line putting a lady to death, for high treason.

<sup>1</sup> Rapin.  
Walsingham. Rapin.

<sup>2</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. iii.  
<sup>3</sup> Bayley's *History of the Tower*



Flushed with his success at Leeds, King Edward recalled his banished favourites, the two Despencers, whose counsels quite accorded with the previous persuasions of the queen to use the military force which he had levied for the reduction of the Leeds Castle, for the purpose of repressing the power of the associate barons.<sup>1</sup>

Isabella was so deeply offended with the barons, as the allies of the Badlesmeres, that she not only refused to employ her influence in composing the differences between them and the king, but did everything in her power to influence the mind of her lord against them.<sup>2</sup>

Lancaster was taken at the battle of Boroughbridge, where the sovereign fought in person against the associate barons, March 16th, 1322. The earl, and ninety-five of his adherents, were conducted as prisoners to Pontefract Castle, where the king sat in judgment upon him, with a small jury of peers, by whom he was sentenced to lose his head. The queen was not aware of her uncle's sentence till after his execution, which took place only a few hours after his doom was pronounced. Probably this indecent haste was used to prevent the possibility of the queen's intercession being used in behalf of her kinsman.<sup>3</sup>

While king Edward was battling the rebellious barons, the queen, for greater security, took up her abode in the Tower. In this royal fortress she gave birth to her youngest child, the lady Joanna, who from that circumstance was called Joanna de la Tour.<sup>4</sup>

Some time before the birth of the princess Joanna, the two Mortimers, uncle and nephew, having been taken in arms against the king, were brought to the Tower as state prisoners, under sentence of death and confiscation of their great estates.<sup>5</sup> Roger Mortimer, lord of Chirk, the uncle, died of famine, through the neglect or cruelty of his gaolers in failing to supply him with the necessaries of life, it has been said, soon after his capture. Roger Mortimer, the nephew, was in the pride and vigour of manhood, and possessed of strength of constitution, and energy of mind, to struggle with any hardship to which he might be exposed. The manner in which he contrived, while under sentence of death in one of the prison lodgings of the Tower of London, to create so powerful an interest in the heart of the beautiful consort of his offended sovereign, is not related by any of the chroniclers of that reign. It is possible, however, that Isabella's disposition for intermeddling in political matters might have emboldened this handsome and audacious rebel to obtain personal interviews with her, under the colour of being willing to communicate to her the secrets of his party. He was the husband of a French lady, Jane de Joinville, the heiress of Sir Peter Joinville, and was in all probability only too well acquainted with the language that was most pleasing to the ear of the queen, and the manners and refinements of her native land, which in civilization was greatly in advance

<sup>1</sup> Walsingham. Rapin.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Bartholomew Badlesmere, the primary cause of the war, was taken at Stowe Park, the seat of his nephew, the bishop of Lincoln, and ignominiously hanged at Canterbury.

<sup>4</sup> La Moor. Walsingham. Bayley's History of the Tower. Brayley. Britton, ditto.

<sup>5</sup> Walsingham, &c. De la Moor.



of the bellicose realm of England. Be this as it may, Mortimer was reprieved through the good offices of some powerful intercessor; and the king commuted his sentence of death into perpetual imprisonment in the Tower. This occasioned some astonishment, when it was remembered that Mortimer was the first who had commenced the civil war by his fierce attack on the lands of Hugh Despencer, who was his sworn foe, and who at this very time had regained more than his former sway in the council of king Edward; but at that time the influence of the queen was pa amount to any other, and it was probably on this account that the deadly feud commenced between her and the two Despenchers, which ended so fatally for both.<sup>1</sup>

About this period, we observe the following precept, addressed by king Edward to his treasurer and the barons of the exchequer, for the supply of his own and his queen's wardrobe.

"Edward, by the grace of God, &c. &c.

"We command that ye provide sixteen pieces of cloth for the apparelling of ourselves and our dear companion, also furs, against the next feast of Christmas, and thirteen pieces of cloth for corsets for our said companion and her damsels, with naping linen<sup>2</sup> and other things of which we stand in need against the said feast; requiring you to assign to William Cassonces, the clerk of our wardrobe, one hundred and fifteen pounds, in such manner as may obtain prompt payment of the same for this purpose.

"Given at Langley, the 10th day of December, and of our reign the 15th."<sup>3</sup>

The king and Isabella spent their Christmas together, and it is probable that she availed herself of that opportunity of obtaining not only so unconscionable an allowance of cloth for her corsets, but a reprieve from death for Mortimer.

In the succeeding year, 1323, we find the tameless border chief, from his dungeon in the Tower, organizing a plan for the seizure, not only of that royal fortress, but Windsor and Wallingford. Again was Mortimer condemned to suffer death for high treason, but through the agency of Adam Orleton, and Beck, bishop of Durham, he obtained a respite. On the 1st of August, the same year, Gerard Alspaye, the valet of Segrave, the constable of the Tower, who was supposed to be in co-operation with him, gave the men-at-arms a soporific potion in their drink provided by the queen; and while the guards were asleep, Mortimer passed through a hole he had worked in his own prison into the kitchen of the royal residence, ascended the chimney, got on the roof of the palace, and from thence to the Thames side by a ladder of ropes. Segrave's valet then took a sculler and rowed him over to the opposite bank of the river, where they found a party of seven horsemen pertaining to Mortimer waiting to receive him. With this guard he made his way to the coast of Hampshire; from thence, pretending to sail to the Isle of Wight, the boat in reality conveyed the fugitives on board a large ship, provided by Ralf Botton, a London merchant, which was anchored

<sup>1</sup> Walsingham. De la Moor. Rapin.

<sup>2</sup> Rot. E. II. 47.

<sup>3</sup> Table-linen.

<sup>4</sup> Leland's Collectanea.

off the Needles: this ship landed them safely in Normandy; and from thence Mortimer got to Paris.<sup>1</sup>

Edward was in Lancashire when he heard of the escape of Mortimer: he roused all England with a hue and cry after him, but does not seem to have had the least idea of his destination, as he sought him chiefly in the Mortimers' hereditary demesnes, the marches of Wales.<sup>2</sup>

Directly Mortimer was in safety, the queen commenced her deep-laid schemes for the ruin of his powerful enemies, the Despencers, whom she taught the people to regard as the cause of the sanguinary executions of Lancaster and his adherents; though her own impatient desire of avenging the affronts she had received from lady Badlesmere, had been the means of exasperating the sovereign against that party. Now she protested against all the punishments that had been inflicted, and was the first who pretended to regard Lancaster as a martyr and a saint.

The Despencers had succeeded in obtaining the same sort of ascendancy over the mind of the king that had been once enjoyed by Gaveston; and the whole authority of his feeble despotism was committed to their administration. Their first act was to curtail the revenues of the queen. This imprudent step afforded Isabella a plausible excuse for declaring open hostilities against them. No one had ever offended her without paying a deadly penalty for their rashness.

She perceived that she had lost her influence with her royal husband, during his absence in the civil war in the north; and though it is evident that an illicit passion on her part had preceded the alienation of the king's regard for her, she did not complain the less loudly of her wrongs on that account; neither did she scruple to brand the Despencers with all the accusations she had formerly hurled at Gaveston, charging them with having deprived her of the love of her royal husband.<sup>3</sup> There was a fierce struggle for supremacy between her and the Despencers, during the year 1324, which ended in the discharge of all her French servants, and the substitution of an inadequate pension for herself, instead of the royal demesnes, which had been settled on her by the king.<sup>4</sup>

Isabella wrote her indignant complaints of this treatment to her brother, Charles le Bel, who had just succeeded to the throne of France, declaring, "that she was held in no higher consideration than a servant in the palace of the king her husband," whom she styled "*a gripple miser*,"<sup>5</sup> a character which the thoughtless and prodigal Edward was very far from meriting. The king of France, exasperated by his sister's representations of her wrongs, made an attack on Guienne, which afforded an

<sup>1</sup> Rymer. Bayley's Hist. of the Tower.

<sup>2</sup> "Mortimer," says the chronicle quoted by Drayton, "being in the Tower, ordered a feast for his birthday, and inviting there sir Stephen Segrave constable of the Tower with the rest of the officers belonging to the same, gave them a sleepy drink provided him by the queen, by which means he got liberty for his escape: he swam the Thames to the opposite shore, the queen doubting much of his strength for such an exploit, as he had been long in confinement."

<sup>3</sup> Walsingham. De la Moor.

<sup>4</sup> Walsingham. Rapin. Speed.

<sup>5</sup> De la Moor. Speed.

excuse to the Despensers for advising king Edward to deprive the queen of her last possession in England, the earldom of Cornwall. The king resumed this grant in a peculiarly disobliging manner, giving the queen to understand "that he did not consider it safe to allow any portion of his territories to remain in her hands, as she maintained a secret correspondence with the enemies of the state."<sup>1</sup>

The feuds between the royal pair proceeded to such a height, that Isabella denied her company to her lord,<sup>2</sup> and he refused to come where she was.<sup>3</sup> The queen passionately charged this estrangement on the Despensers, and reiterated her complaints to her brother.

King Charles testified his indignant sense of his sister's treatment, by declaring his intention of seizing all the provinces held by king Edward of the French crown, he having repeatedly summoned him in vain to perform the accustomed homage for them. Edward was not prepared to engage in a war for their defence, and neither he nor his ministers liked the alternative of a personal visit to the court of the incensed brother of queen Isabella, after the indignities that had been offered to her.<sup>4</sup>

In this dilemma, Isabella herself obligingly volunteered to act as a mediatrix between the two monarchs, provided she might be permitted to go to Paris to negotiate a pacification. Edward, who had so often been extricated from his political difficulties by the diplomatic talents of his fair consort, was only too happy to avail himself of her proposal.<sup>5</sup>

It has been asserted by many historians that queen Isabella privately withdrew to France with her son, the prince of Wales, to claim the protection of her brother, Charles le Bel, against the king her husband, and his ministers, the Despensers; but a careful reference to those authorities which may be called the fountain-heads of history,—the record rolls of that reign, will satisfactorily prove that she was sent as an accredited envoy from the deluded Edward, to negotiate this treaty with her royal brother.

Froissart, who purposely veils the blackest traits of Isabella's character, her profound hypocrisy and treachery, represents her as flying from the barbarous persecutions of her husband and the Despensers, like some distressed queen of romance, and engaging, by her beauty and eloquence, all the chivalric spirits of France and Hainault to arm for the redress of her wrongs. He has succeeded in giving just such a colour to her proceedings as would be least offensive to her son Edward III., with whom, for obvious reasons, the whole business must have been a peculiarly sore subject.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Walsingham. Rapin.

<sup>2</sup> Froissart.

<sup>3</sup> Carte. Rapin.

<sup>4</sup> De la Moor.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> It is to be remembered that Froissart, who, though a contemporary, was too young, at the time these events took place, to speak from his own knowledge has followed what he calls the "true chronicle" of John le Bel, canon of St Lambert of Liege, who was the favourite counsellor and confessor of John of Hainault, the sworn champion of queen Isabella, of whose iniquities the sly ecclesiastic is a subtle palliator, and has evidently done his best to mystify such parts of her conduct as were indefensible.

The propriety of the queen undertaking the mission to the court of France, was debated, first in the council, and afterwards in the parliament which met January 21st,<sup>1</sup> 1325, to consider the affairs of Guienne, when it was agreed that any expedient was better than pursuing the war.<sup>2</sup>

A hollow reconciliation was effected between Isabella and the Despensers, who were delighted at the prospect of her departure from England; and the royal pair parted, apparently on terms of the most affectionate confidence and good-will.

Isabella sailed for France in the beginning of May, attended only by the lord John Cromwell and four knights. She landed at Calais, and proceeded to Paris, where the first-fruit of her mediation was a truce between her brother and the king, her husband. She then negotiated an amicable treaty, proposing the surrender of Guienne, already forfeited by the neglect of the feudal homage to the king of France, which was to be restored at her personal instances, by her brother, to the king of England, on condition of his performing the accustomed homage, and remunerating the king of France for the expenses of the war. This was to take place at a friendly interview between the two monarchs at Beauvais.<sup>3</sup>

The Despensers, anticipating with alarm the great probability of the queen regaining her wonted ascendancy over the mind of her royal husband, dissuaded him from crossing to the shores of France, even when his preparations for the voyage were completed. Isabella, who was well informed of these demurs, and perfectly understood the vacillating character of her husband, proposed to him that he should invest their son, the prince of Wales, with the duchy of Guienne and the earldom of Ponthieu, and send him as his substitute to perform the homage for those countries to the king, her brother, king Charles, having signified his assent to such an arrangement, in compliance with her solicitations.

Edward, far from suspecting the guileful intentions of his consort, eagerly complied with this proposal; and the Despensers, not being possessed of sufficient penetration to understand the motives which prompted the queen to get the heir of England into her own power, fell into the snare.

On the 12th of September, 1325, prince Edward, attended by the bishops of Oxford, Exeter, and a splendid train of nobles and knights, sailed from Dover,<sup>4</sup> and, landing at Boulogne, was joined by the queen his mother on the 14th, who accompanied him to Paris, where his first interview with the king his uncle took place in her presence, and he performed the act of feudal homage on the 21st, at the Bois de Vincennes.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Walsingham. Public Acts.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Rymer's Fœdera.

<sup>4</sup> Rymer's Fœdera.

<sup>5</sup> Act made at the wood of Vincennes by Edward, (son of Edward II.) in the presence of the queen his mother and many grandees of England. . . . After the usual formula regarding the homage of Guienne, a clause is added, in these words—"And as for the country of Ponthieu, according to the protestation made by madame the queen of England, then present, the homage done by the

# ISABELLA OF FRANCE,

SURNAMED THE FAIR,

QUEEN OF EDWARD II.

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## CHAPTER II.

Isabella's intrigues—Queen and prince recalled to England—Her disobedience—King Edward's letters—Barons invite her to invade England—Familiarities with Mortimer—Scandal at the French court—Isabella dismissed from France—Her visit to Hainault—Her voyage to England—Lands—Enthusiasm of the people—Proclamation—Her triumphal progress—Capture of the king—Londoners welcome the queen—Deposition of Edward II.—Queen's hypocrisy—Seizes the government—Exorbitant dower—Her ball prevented by a popular tumult—Murder of the king—Isabella's peace with Scotland—League against the queen—Her vindictive disposition—Follies of Mortimer—Parliament at Nottingham—Isabella's precautions—Mortimer taken prisoner—Her passionate intercession—His execution—Her imprisonment—Manner of spending her time there—Reports of her madness—Visits of her son—References to her in the Parliamentary Rolls—Her household at Castle Rising—Visited by Edward III. and Philippa—Death of Isabella—Hypocrisy in death—Entrance of her funeral into London—Buried by Mortimer's side.

THE wording of the treaty negotiated between Isabella and her brother, the king of France, was couched in such ambiguous terms, as to leave considerable matter of dispute between king Edward and that monarch, even after the required homage had been performed by the heir of England, for the fiefs held of the French crown. This difference, which regarded the province of Agenois, had been contrived by Isabella, to afford a plausible pretext for prolonging her stay in Paris. She was there joined by her paramour, Mortimer, and all the banished English lords who had fled from the persecutions of the Spencers flocked round her.<sup>1</sup> She held frequent councils and meetings with the declared enemies of king Edward's person and government, and she altogether avoided the commissioners,<sup>2</sup> by whose advice the king had appointed her to be guided. The English ambassadors were surprised and offended at the conduct of the queen, and the frivolousness of the pretences on which she from day to day delayed her departure from Paris. But Walter Stapleton, the loyal bishop of Exeter, whom she had endeavoured to draw into her conspiracy, withdrew to England, informed the king of

prince her son was not in any way to prejudice her interests therein, and the said Edward promises to hold peace for his father; 1335, the 14th September."

—Abstract of the French Act, copied from Harleian MSS.

<sup>1</sup> De la Moor. Walsingham.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

her proceedings, and urged him to command her immediate return, with the prince of Wales.<sup>1</sup> King Edward vainly issued his private letters and royal summonses to his consort and son for that purpose: his most peremptory orders were disregarded by Isabella, who asserted "that it was the intention of the Despencers to cause her to be put to death if she returned to England:" on which the king of France, her brother, wrote to King Edward, "that he could not permit her to return to him, unless she were guaranteed from the evil that was meditated against her by her enemies the Despencers."<sup>2</sup>

King Edward's manly and eloquent reply to this letter is preserved among the Close Record Rolls of the nineteenth year of his reign. We translate it from the ancient French copy, printed in the fourth volume of Rymer's *Fœdera*:

"VERY DEAR AND BELOVED BROTHER,

"We have received, and well considered, your letters delivered to us, by the honourable father in God, the bishop of Winchester, who has also discoursed with us, by word of mouth, on the contents of the said letters.

"It seems that you have been told, dearest brother, by persons whom you consider worthy of credit, that our companion, the queen of England, dare not return to us, being in peril of her life, as she apprehends, from Hugh le Despencer. Certes, dearest brother, it cannot be that she can have fear of him, or any other man in our realm; since *par Dieu!* if either Hugh, or any other living being, in our dominions, would wish to do her ill, and it came to our knowledge, we would chastise him in a manner that should be an example to all others; and this is, and always will be, our entire will, as long as, by God's mercy, we have the power. And, dearest brother, know certainly, that we have never perceived that he has, either secretly or openly, by word, look, or action, demeaned himself, otherwise than he ought, in all points, to do, to so very dear a lady. And when we remember the amiable looks and words between them that we have seen, and the great friendship she professed for him before she crossed the sea, and the loving letters which she has lately sent him, which he has shown to us, we have no power to believe that our consort can, of herself, credit such things of him; we cannot, in any way, believe it of him, who, after our own person, is the man, of all our realm, who would most wish to do her honour, and has always shown good sincerity to you. We pray you, dearest brother, not to give credence to any one who would make you otherwise suppose, but to put your faith in those who have always borne true witness to you in other things, and who have the best reason to know the truth of this matter. Wherefore we beseech you, dearest brother, both for your honour and ours, but more especially for that of our said consort, that you would compel her to return to us with all speed; for, certes, we have been ill at ease for the want of her company, in which we have much delight; and if our surety and safe conduct is not enough, then let her come to us, on the pledge of *your* good faith for us.

"We also entreat you, dearly beloved brother, that you would be pleased to deliver up to us Edward, our beloved eldest son, your nephew; and that of your love and affection to him you would render to him the lands of the duchy,<sup>3</sup> that he be not disinherited, which we cannot suppose you wish. Dearly beloved brother, we pray you to suffer him to come to us with all speed, for we have often sent for him, and we greatly wish to see him and to speak with him, and every day we long for his return.

<sup>1</sup> MS. *Lives of the Lord Treasurers*, by Francis Thynne, esq., in the collection of sir Thomas Phillipps, bart., at Middle Hill.

<sup>2</sup> De la Moor. Walsingham. Rapin. Speed.

<sup>3</sup> Aquitaine, for which the young prince had gone to Paris to do his homage to Charles.

"And, dearest brother, at this time the honourable father in God, Walter, bishop of Exeter, has returned to us, having certified to us that his person was in peril from some of our banished enemies, and we, having great need of his counsel, enjoined him on his faith and allegiance to return forthwith, leaving all other matters in the best way he could. We pray you, therefore, to excuse the sudden departure of the said bishop for the cause before said.

"Given at Westminster, the first day of December (1325)."

Edward's letter to Isabella herself, on the same subject, is exceedingly temperate, but evidently written under a deep sense of injury, and with a formal courtesy, very different from the friendly and confidential style in which he addresses her brother, as our readers will perceive.

#### KING EDWARD TO QUEEN ISABELLA.

"LADY,

"Oftentimes have we sent to you, both before and after the homage, of our great desire to have you with us, and of our grief of heart at your long absence; and as we understand that you do us great mischief by this, we will that you come to us with all speed, and without further excuses.

"Before the homage<sup>1</sup> was performed, you made the advancement of that business an excuse, and now that we have sent by the honourable father, the bishop of Winchester, our safe conduct to you, 'you will not come for the fear and doubt of Hugh le Despencer!' whereat we cannot marvel too much, when we recall your flattering deportment towards each other in our presence, so amicable and sweet was your deportment, with special assurances and looks, and other tokens

the firmest friendship, and also, since then, your very especial letters to him late date, which he has shown to us.

"And certes, lady, we know for truth, and so know you, that he has always procured from us all the honour he could for you, nor to you has either evil or villany been done since you entered into our companionship; unless, peradventure, as you may yourself remember, once, we had cause to give you secretly some words of reproof for your pride, but without other harshness: and, doubtless, both God and the law of our holy church require you to honour us, and for nothing earthly to trespass against our commandments, or to forsake our company. And we are much displeased, now the homage has been made to our dearest brother, the king of France, and we have such fair prospect of amity, that you, whom we sent to make the peace, should be the cause (which God forefend) of increasing the breach between us by things which are feigned and contrary to the truth. Wherefore we charge you as urgently as we can, that ceasing from all pretences, delays, and false excuses,<sup>2</sup> you come to us with all the haste you can. Our said bishop has reported to us, that our brother, the king of France, told you in his presence, 'that, by the tenor of your safe conduct, you would not be delayed or molested in coming to us as a wife should to her lord.' And as to your expenses, when it shall be that you will come to us as a wife should to her lord, we will provide that there shall be no deficiency in aught that is pertaining to you, and that you be not in any way dishonoured by us. Also, we require of you that our dear son Edward return to us with all possible speed, for we much desire to see him and to speak with him."<sup>3</sup>

King Edward concludes this letter, with repeating the same observations to the queen, on the sudden return of the bishop of Exeter, which our readers have seen in his letter to her brother, the king of France. Both letters are dated on the same day, December 1, 1326.

<sup>1</sup> Which was performed by prince Edward, their son.

<sup>2</sup> *Excusation* is the word used in the original.

<sup>3</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. iv. From the Close Rolls, 19th Edw. II.

His letter to the prince of Wales, written on the next day, is as follows :—

“ **VERY DEAR SON,**

“ As you are young and of tender age, we remind you of that which we charged and commanded you at your departure from Dover, and you answered then, as we know with good will, ‘that you would not trespass or disobey any of our injunctions in any point for any one.’ And, since that your homage has been received by our dearest brother, the king of France, your uncle, be pleased to take your leave of him, and return to us with all speed in company with your mother, if so be that she will come quickly, and if she will not come, then come you without further delay, for we have great desire to see you, and to speak with you; therefore stay not for your mother, nor for any one else, on our blessing.

“ Given at Westminster, the 2d day of December.”

It is matter of regret that the replies to these most interesting letters have not been preserved among our national records; but the substance of them may be gathered from the following urgent and touching appeals<sup>1</sup> from the injured husband of Isabella, to the prince their son, and to her brother the king of France :

“ **EDWARD, FAIR SON,**

“ We understand by your letters written in reply to ours that you remember well the charge we gave you; among other things, not to contract marriage, nor to suffer it to be contracted for you, without our knowledge and consent; and also that at your departure from Dover you said, ‘that it should be your pleasure to obey our commandments, as far as you could, all your days.’”

“ Fair son, if thus you have done, you have done wisely and well, and according to your duty, so as to have grace of God of us and all men; and if not, then you cannot avoid the wrath of God, the reproach of men, and our great indignation, for we charged you so lately and so strictly that you should remember well these things, and that you should by no means marry, nor suffer yourself to be married without our previous consent and advice; for no other thing that you could do would occasion greater injury and pain of heart to us. And inasmuch as it seems you say ‘you cannot return to us because of your mother,’ it causes us great uneasiness of heart that you cannot be allowed by her to do that which is your natural duty, and which not doing will lead to much mischief.

“ Fair son, you know how dearly she would have been loved and cherished, if she had timely come according to her duty to her lord. We have knowledge of much of her evil doings, to our sorrow; how that she devises pretences for absenting herself from us, on account of our dear and faithful nephew,<sup>2</sup> H. le Despencer, who has always so well and loyally served us, while you and all the world have seen that she openly, notoriously, and knowing it to be contrary to her duty, and against the welfare of our crown, has attracted to herself, and retains in her company, the Mortimer, our traitor and mortal foe, proved, attainted, and adjudged, and *him* she accompanies in the house and abroad in despite of us, of our crown, and the right ordering of the realm—him, the malefactor<sup>3</sup> whom our beloved brother the king of France at our request banished from his dominions as our enemy! And worse than this she has done, if worse than *this* can be, in allowing you to consort with our said enemy, making him your counsellor, and you openly to herd and associate with him in the sight of all the world, doing so great a villany and dishonour both to yourself and us, to the prejudice

<sup>1</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. i. p. 182.

<sup>2</sup> King Edward bestows this appellation on the favourite, because he was the husband of his great-niece the heiress of Gloucester.

<sup>3</sup> *Malveys* is the word used in the original French by the incensed king.



of our crown, and of the laws and customs of our realm, which you are supremely bound to hold, preserve, and maintain.

"Wherefore, fair son, desist you from a part which is so shameful, and may be to you perilous and injurious in too many ways. We are not pleased with you, and neither for your mother, nor for any other, ought you to displease us. We charge you by the faith, love, and allegiance which you owe us, and on our blessing, that you come to us without opposition, delay, or any further excuse; for your mother has written to us, 'that if you wish to return to us she will not prevent it,' and we do not understand that your uncle the king detains you against the form of your safe conduct. In no manner, then, either for your mother, or to go to the duchy, nor for any other cause, delay to come to us. Our commands are for your good, and for your honour, by the help of God. Come quickly, then, without further excuse, if you would have our blessing, and avoid our reproach and indignation.

"It is our wish to order all things for the good of the duchy, and our other dominions, for our mutual honour and benefit.

"If John of Bretagne, and John de Cromwell, will come in your company, they will do their duty.

"Fair son, trespass not against our commands, for we hear much that you have done of things you ought not.

"Given at Lichfield, the 18th day of March."<sup>1</sup>

From the tenour of this letter, it is evident, that Edward II. had been informed of his queen's clandestine and certainly most unconstitutional proceedings, with regard to contracting their son, the youthful heir of England, in marriage, without his knowledge or the consent of parliament. This was the more annoying to the king, because he was himself negotiating a double marriage between the prince of Wales and the infanta Eleanora of Arragon, and the young king of Arragon with his eldest daughter the princess Eleanor;<sup>2</sup> and matters were so far advanced that application had been made to the pope for a dispensation,<sup>3</sup> when the whole scheme was traversed by Isabella's contract for her son's marriage with a daughter of the count of Hainault. It seems that the bride's portion, which was paid in advance, was required by Isabella, to support herself against her unhappy lord, to whom, however, she continued to hold out unmeaning professions of her dutiful inclinations, as we perceive from his reply to one of the letters addressed to him by her brother, the king of France:—

"DEAREST BROTHER,

"We have considered well your letters, in which you signify that you have spoken with good diligence to your sister, touching the things on which we have replied to you, and that she has told you, 'that it is her desire to be with us, as in our company, as a good wife ought to be in that of her lord, and that the friendship between her and our dear and faithful nephew H. le Despencer was but feigned on her part, because she saw it was expedient for her support in past time, and to secure herself from worse treatment.' Certes, dearest brother, if she loved us, she would desire to be in our company, as she has said. She who ought to be the mediatrix between us of entire and lasting peace, should not be the cause of stirring up fresh strife, as she has done when she was sent to nourish peace and love between you and us, which we intended in all good faith when we sent her to you; but the thought of her heart was to devise that

<sup>1</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, from the Close Rolls of the 19th year of Edward II.

<sup>2</sup> See Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. iv.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

pretence for withdrawing from us. We have already shown you that what she has told you is, saving your reverence, not the truth, for never (so much as she has done against us) has she received either evil or villany from us or from any other. Neither has she had any occasion 'for feints to support herself in times passed, nor to escape from worse,'<sup>1</sup> for never in the slightest instance has evil been done to her by him;<sup>2</sup> and, since she has departed from us and come to you, what has compelled her to send to our dear and trusty nephew, H. le Despencer, letters of such great and especial amity as she has been pleased to do from time to time?

"But truly, dearest brother, it must be as apparent to you as to us and to all men, that she does not love us as she ought to love her lord; and the cause why she has spoken falsehood of our nephew, and withdrawn herself from us, proceeds, according to my thoughts, from a disordered will, when she so openly, notoriously, and knowingly, against her duty," &c. &c.

Here king Edward passionately repeats the same observations respecting Isabella's shameless intimacy with Mortimer, of which he had made use in the preceding letter to the prince his son, and then proceeds:

"If you wished her well, dearest brother, you would chastise her for this misconduct, and make her demean herself as she ought, for the honour of all those to whom she belongs. Then our son, dearest brother, is made also by his mother, your sister, the companion of our said traitor and foe, who is his counsellor in delaying his return in our despite."

Some requests touching Guienne follow, and after repeating his entreaties for his son to be restored to him, king Edward concludes his letter in the following words:

"And that you will be pleased to do these things, dearest brother, for the sake of God, reason, good faith, and natural fraternity, without paying regard to the light pleasure of a woman, is our desire:

"Given at Lichfield, the 18th of March."

After this letter, Charles le Bel is said to have looked very coolly on his sister, and even to have urged her to return, with her son, to the royal husband; but Isabella had another game in view, and had gone too far, she felt, to recede, without incurring in reality the perils which she had before pretended to dread. Her party in England had now, through the malignant activity of her especial agent, Adam Orleton, bishop of Hereford, become so strong, that about this time she received a deputation from the confederate barons, assuring her "that if she could only raise a thousand men, and would come with the prince to England, at the head of that force, they would place him on the throne to govern by her guidance."<sup>3</sup>

The queen had already been very active in securing the assistance of many enterprising young nobles, and soldiers of fortune, who were, by her persuasive words and fair promises,<sup>4</sup> ready to attend her; but though she had conducted her preparations with great secrecy, the Despenchers

<sup>1</sup> These sentences marked by commas are evidently quotations from Isabella's representations.

<sup>2</sup> Hugh le Despencer. Yet the deprivation of the queen's revenue was a serious injury; its restoration must have taken place directly, or the queen would have urged it at this time as a matter of complaint.

<sup>3</sup> Walsingham. Le Moor. Froissart.

<sup>4</sup> Froissart.

had information of her proceedings, and, if we may trust the assertions of Froissart, they circumvented her, by the skilful distribution of counter bribes among the ministers of the king of France; nay, he even goes so far as to say that the Despencers addressed their golden arguments to king Charles himself, so successfully, that he withdrew his countenance from his royal sister, and forbade any person, under pain of punishment, to aid or assist her in her projected invasion of England.<sup>1</sup> Less prejudiced historians, however, attribute the marked change of king Charles, with regard to his sister's cause, to the scandal which her undisguised passion for Mortimer had caused in his court.

Some impression, too, might have been made on the mind of Isabella's brother, by the urgent appeal which her luckless husband about this time addressed to him, in the following letter:

"MOST DEAR AND BELOVED BROTHER,

"We would wish you to remember, that we have at different times signified to you by our letters, how improperly your sister our wife has conducted herself in withdrawing from us, and refusing to return at our command, while she so notoriously has attached to her company, and consorts with, our traitor, and mortal enemy the Mortimer, and our brother enemies there, and also makes Edward our son and heir an adherent of the same our enemy, to our great shame, and that of every one of her blood; and if you wish her well, you ought, both for your own honour and ours, to have these things duly redressed."

Then, after reiterating his earnest entreaties to his royal brother-in-law, for the restoration of the prince, his son, "who is," he observes, "of too tender an age to guide and govern himself, and therefore ought to be under his paternal care,"—king Edward implores him to put his son in possession of the before-named duchy, for which he had performed the homage as stipulated, and that without dwelling too particularly on the wording of the covenant, (which had evidently been designedly mystified by the contrivance of Isabella,) he adds:

"But these things are as nothing, it is the herding of our said wife and son, with our traitors and mortal enemies, that notoriously continues; insomuch, that the said traitor, the Mortimer, was carried in the train of our said son publicly to Paris, at the solemnity of the coronation of our very dear sister your wife, the queen of France, at the Pentecost just passed, to our great shame, and in despite of us.

"Wherefore, dearest brother, we pray you, as earnestly as we can, for the rights and blessings of peace, and the entire friendship that subsists between us, that you will of your benevolence effectually attend to our supreme desire, that we be not thus dishonoured, and our son disinherited, which we cannot suppose you wish.

"Dearest brother, you ought to feel for us, and so should all men of our estate, for much we are, and much we have been, grieved at the shameful despites and great injury which we have so long endured. Nay, verily, brother-in-law, but we cannot bear it longer. The Holy Spirit have charge of you."<sup>2</sup>

At the same time, in the month of June, 1326, king Edward made a last fruitless attempt to prevail on the prince, his son, to withdraw him-

<sup>1</sup> Froissart's Chronicles.

<sup>2</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, from the Close Rolls of the 19th year of Edward II

self from the evil counsels and contumacious companions of the queen, his mother, and to return to him. This letter, like the preceding correspondence, affords indubitable evidence how accurately the unfortunate husband of Isabella was informed of her proceedings with regard to Mortimer.

“EDWARD, FAIR SON,

“We have seen by your letters lately written to us, that you well remembered the charges we enjoined you on your departure from Dover, and that you have not transgressed our commands in any point, that was in your power to avoid. But to us it appears that you have not humbly obeyed our commands as a good son ought his father, since you have not returned to us to be under government, as we have enjoined you by our other letters, on our blessing, but have notoriously held companionship, and your mother also, with Mortimer, our traitor and mortal enemy, who, in company with your mother and others, was publicly carried to Paris in your train, to the solemnity of the coronation, at Pentecost just past, in signal despite of us, and to the great dishonour both of us and you: for truly he is neither a meet companion for your mother, nor for you, and we hold that much evil to the country will come of it.

“Also we understand that you, through counsel, which is contrary both to our interest and yours, have proceeded to make divers alterations, injunctions, and ordinances without our advice, and contrary to our orders, in the duchy of Guienne, which we have given you; but you ought to remember the conditions of the gift, and your reply when it was conferred upon you at Dover. These things are inconvenient, and must be most injurious. Therefore we commend and charge you, on the faith and love you ought to bear us, and on our blessing, that you show yourself our dear and well-beloved son as you have aforetime done, and, ceasing from all excuses of your mother, or any like those that you have just written, you come to us here with all haste, that we may ordain for you and your state as honourably as you can desire. By right and reason you ought to have no other governor than us, neither should you wish to have.

“Also fair son, we charge you by no means to marry till you return to us, nor without our advice and consent, nor for any cause either go to the duchy, or elsewhere, against our will and command.

“P. S. Edward, fair son, you are of tender age: take our commandments tenderly to heart, and so rule your conduct with humility, as you would escape our reproof, our grief and indignation, and advance your own interest and honour. Believe no counsel that is contrary to the will of your father, as the wise king Solomon instructs you. Understand certainly, that if you now act contrary to our counsel, and continue in wilful disobedience, you will feel it all the days of your life, and all other sons will take example to be disobedient to their lords and fathers.”<sup>1</sup>

The evil influence of Isabella prevented the paternal remonstrances of the royal writer from having any proper effect on the mind of her son; and it should seem that she succeeded in persuading him that she was the object of the most barbarous persecution, both from the Despencers and the king, her husband.

King Edward sent copies of these letters to the pope,<sup>2</sup> and entreated his interference so effectually, that the pontiff addressed his censures to Charles le Bel, on his detention of the queen of England from her royal

<sup>1</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. iv. From the Close Rolls of 19th Edward II.

<sup>2</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. iv. From the Close Rolls of 19th of Edward II. *Frois-sart*. Walsingham.

consort, and charged him, under the penalty of excommunication, to dismiss both Isabella and her son from his dominions.

"When king Charles had read these letters," says Froissart, "he was greatly disturbed, and ordered his sister to be made acquainted with their contents, for he had held no conversation with her for a long time, and commanded her to leave his kingdom immediately, or he would make her leave it with shame."<sup>1</sup>

"When the queen received this angry and contemptuous message from her brother, she was greatly troubled;" for the French barons had already withdrawn themselves, either as Froissart states, by the king's commands, or through disgust at the infatuation of her conduct with regard to Mortimer, "and she had no adviser left but her dear cousin, Robert d'Artois," and he could only assist her secretly, since the king, her brother, had not only said, but sworn, "that whoever should speak in behalf of his sister, the queen of England, should forfeit his lands, and be banished the realm." Robert of Artois had also discovered that a plan was in agitation for delivering queen Isabella, the prince her son, the earl of Kent, and Sir Roger Mortimer, to king Edward.<sup>2</sup>

"Sir Robert Artois came in the middle of the night to warn Isabella of the peril in which she stood. The queen was struck with consternation at this intelligence, and Artois strongly urged her to enter the imperial territories, and to throw herself upon the protection of some of the independent German princes, especially William earl of Hainault, whose consort was Isabella's first cousin.

"The queen ordered her baggage to be made ready as secretly as possible, and having *paid everything*, (a point of honesty recorded to her credit by Froissart,) she quitted Paris, with Mortimer; and accompanied by her son, and by her husband's brother the earl of Kent, who had been attached to the homage deputation, and was at this time decidedly her partisan. After some days she came into the country of Cambrai. When she found that she was in the territories of the empire, she was more at her ease; she entered Ostrevant in Hainault, and lodged at the house of a poor knight, called sir Eustace d'Ambreticourt,<sup>3</sup> who received her with great pleasure, and entertained her in the best manner he could, insomuch that afterwards the queen of England and her son invited the knight, his wife, and all his children, to England, and advanced their fortunes in various ways."

"The arrival of the queen of England was soon known in the house of the good earl of Hainault, who was then at Valenciennes; sir John, his brother, was likewise informed of the hour when she alighted at the house of the lord of Ambreticourt. This sir John being at that time very young, and panting for glory, like a knight errant, mounted his horse, and, accompanied by a few persons, set out from Valenciennes, and arrived in the evening to pay the queen every respect and honour."

The queen was at this time very dejected, and made a lamentable complaint to him of all her griefs; which affected sir John so much that he mixed his tears with hers, and said :

Froissart.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

"Lady, see here your knight, who will not fail to die for you, though every one else should forsake you; therefore I will do every thing in my power to conduct you safely to England with your son, and to restore you to your rank, with the assistance of your friends in those parts; and I, and all those whom I can influence, will risk our lives on the adventure for your sake, and we shall have a sufficient armed force, if it please God, without fearing any danger from the king of France."

The queen, who was sitting down and sir John standing before her, would have cast herself at his feet; but the gallant sir John, rising up quickly, caught her in his arms, and said,

"God forbid that the queen of England should do such a thing! Madam, be of good comfort to yourself and company, for I will keep my promise—and you shall come and see my brother and the countess his wife, and all their fine children, who will be rejoiced to see you, for I have heard them say so."<sup>1</sup>

The queen answered: "Sir, I find in you more kindness and comfort than in all the world besides; and I give you five hundred thousand thanks for all you have promised me with so much courtesy. I and my son shall be for ever bound unto you, and we will put the kingdom of England under your management, as in justice it ought to be."<sup>2</sup>

When Isabella quitted the castle of Ambreticourt she told sir Eustace and his lady, "that she trusted a time would come when she and her son could acknowledge their courtesy. She then mounted her horse and set off with her train accompanied by sir John, who with joy and respect conducted her to Valenciennes. Many of the citizens of the town came forth to meet her, and received her with great humility. She was thus conducted to William count of Hainault, who, as well as the countess, received her very graciously. Many great feasts were given on this occasion, as no one knew better than the countess how to do the honours of her house."<sup>3</sup>

Queen Isabella remained at Valenciennes during eight days, with the good count and his countess, Joanna of Valois. Then the queen made every preparation for her departure, and John of Hainault wrote very affectionate letters to certain knight-companions, in whom he put great confidence, from Brabant and Bohemia; "beseeching them, by all the friendship there was between them, to arm in the cause of the distressed queen of England."<sup>4</sup>

All the expedition gathered at Dort. "Then the queen of England took leave of the count of Hainault and his countess, thanking them much for the honourable entertainment they had shown her, and she kissed them at her departure. Sir John, with great difficulty, obtained his lord and brother's permission to accompany Isabella. When he took leave of him he said,—'My dear lord and brother, I am young, and believe that God has inspired me with a desire of this enterprise for my advancement. I also believe for certain, that this lady and her son have been driven from their kingdom wrongfully. If it is for the glory of God to comfort the afflicted, how much more is it to help and succour

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.<sup>2</sup> Ibid.<sup>3</sup> Ibid.<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

one who is daughter of a king, descended from royal lineage, and to whose blood we ourselves are related! I will renounce everything here, and go and take up the cross in heathendom beyond seas, if this good lady leaves us without comfort and aid. But if you grant me a willing leave, I shall do well, and accomplish my purpose.”

When the good earl heard his brother, and perceived the great desire he had for this expedition, he said—

“Dear brother, God forbid there should be any hinderance to your wish, therefore I give you leave, in the name of God!”<sup>1</sup> He then kissed him, and squeezed his hand, in sign of great affection.

The queen, her son, and suite set off, accompanied by sir John, and went that night to Mons, where they slept. They embarked at Dort, according to Froissart, whose account of their voyage and landing on the *terra incognita* between Orford and Harwich, is so marvellous, that we have, in preference, translated the authentic and circumstantial details of the chronicle of Flanders.

“The fleet was tossed with a great tempest, but made the port about noon, when the queen being got safely on shore, her knights and attendants made her a house with four carpets, open in the front, where they kindled her a great fire of the pieces of wreck, some of their ships having been beaten to pieces in the tempest; meantime the Flemish sailors got on shore before midnight all the horses and arms, and then the ships that had survived the storm sailed (the wind being favourable) to the opposite coast. But the queen, finding herself ill at ease on the stormy sea-beach that night, marched at day-break, with banners displayed, towards the next country town, where she found all the houses amply and well furnished with provisions, but all the people fled.”

The advanced guard meantime spread themselves over the country, and seized all the cattle and food they could get, and the owners followed them, crying bitterly, into the presence of the queen, who asked them “what was the fair value of the goods?” and when they named the price, she paid them all liberally in ready money. The people were so pleased with this conduct, that they supplied her well with provisions.

“Queen Isabella arrived at Harwich on the 25th of September, 1326,<sup>2</sup> on the domain of Thomas of Brotherton, the king’s brother, who was the first that greeted her on her landing.<sup>3</sup> Then she was met and welcomed by her uncle, Henry of Lancaster, and many other barons and knights, and almost all the bishops, notwithstanding the king’s proclamation, commanding all men to avoid the queen’s armament at its first landing.”

Her force consisted of two thousand seven hundred and fifty-seven

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.

<sup>2</sup> History of Harwich, by Silas Taylor.

<sup>3</sup> Speaking of this earl of Norfolk, Drayton, with his minute adherence to facts, says:

“And being earl marshal great upon the coast,  
With bells and bonfires welcomes her on shore,  
And by his office gathering up an host,  
Showed the great spleen that he to Edward bore.”

soldiers, well appointed, commanded by lord John of Hainault, brother to her ally, the sovereign of Hainault. Roger Mortimer commanded her English partisans.

The historian of Harwich declares that it was wonderful how the common people flocked to her. Every generous feeling in the English character had been worked upon by her emissaries, who had disseminated inflammatory tales of the persecutions she had endured from the king, her husband, and his barbarous ministers. It was asserted that she had been driven into a foreign land by plots against her life, and that she was the most oppressed of queens—the most injured of wives.

So blinding was the excitement which, at this crisis, pervaded all classes of the people, that the glaring falsehood of her statements, as to the cause of her quitting England, was forgotten; the improprieties of her conduct, which had excited the disgust of her own countrymen, and caused the king, her brother, to expel her with contempt from his dominions, were regarded as the base calumnies of the Despencers. The facts that she came attended by her paramour, an outlawed traitor, and at the head of a band of foreign mercenaries, to raise the standard of revolt against her husband and sovereign, having abused her maternal influence over the mind of the youthful heir of England, to draw him into a parricidal rebellion, excited no feeling of moral or religious reprobation in the nation.

Every Plantagenet in England espoused her cause; but it is to be observed, that the king's younger brothers by the half blood, Thomas of Brotherton and the earl of Kent, were Isabella's first cousins, being the sons of her aunt Marguerite of France, and that Henry of Lancaster was her uncle. The connexion of these princes with the blood-royal of France, had ever led them to make common cause with queen Isabella. By them and by their party she was always treated as if she were a person of more importance than the king her husband.

When the alarming intelligence of the landing of the queen's armament reached the king, he was paralyzed, and, instead of taking measures for defence, he sat down to write pathetic letters to the pope and the king of France, entreating their succour or interference. He then issued a proclamation, proscribing the persons of all those who had taken arms against him, with the exception of queen Isabella, the prince her son, and his brother, the earl of Kent. It is dated Sept. 28, 1326: in it he offers a thousand pounds for the head of the arch-traitor, Roger Mortimer.

The queen, who had traversed England with great celerity, at the head of an increasing army, immediately published a reward of double that sum for the head of the younger Despencer, in her manifesto from Wallingford, wherein she set forth, that her motives in coming are to deliver the kingdom from the misleaders of the king.<sup>1</sup>

The next attack on the king was from the pulpit at Oxford, where Adam Orleton, bishop of Hereford, having called the University together, in the presence of the queen, the prince of Wales, Roger Mortimer, and

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<sup>1</sup> *Fœdera.*



their followers, preached a sermon from the following text : " My head, my head acheth ;" ( 2 Kings iv. 19 ; ) in which, after explaining the queen's motive for appearing in arms, he with unpriestly ferocity concluded with this observation : " When the head of a kingdom becometh sick and diseased, it must of necessity be taken off, without useless attempts to administer any other remedy." <sup>1</sup> The delivery of this murderous doctrine, in the presence of the wife and son of the devoted sovereign, ought to have filled every bosom with horror and indignation ; but such is the blindness of party rage, that its only effect was to increase the madness of the people against their unhappy king. That misjudging prince, after committing the custody of the Tower, and the care of his second son, John of Eltham, to the young lady Despencer, his niece, and the guardianship of the city of London to the faithful Stapleton, bishop of Exeter, left the metropolis, attended by the two Despenchers, the earls of Arundel and Hereford, his chancellor Baldock, bishop of Norwich, and a few others of his adherents, and fled to Bristol, with the intent of taking refuge in Ireland. <sup>2</sup>

The departure of the king was the signal for a general rising of the Londoners, in which the bishop of Exeter immediately fell a sacrifice to the fury of the partisans of the queen and Mortimer. The head of this honest prelate was cut off, and presented to the queen at Gloucester, as an acceptable offering. " Six weeks afterwards," says Thynne, " the queen, forgetting all discourtesies, did ( like a woman desirous to show that his death happened without her liking, and also that she revered his calling ) command his corpse to be removed from the place of its first dishonourable interment under a heap of rubbish, and caused it to be buried in his own cathedral." <sup>3</sup> The lady Despencer, intimidated by this murder, surrendered the Tower to the mob, who proclaimed prince John the custos of the city ; and in the queen's name liberated the prisoners in all the gaols.

" The queen and all her company," says Froissart, " the lords of Hainault and their suite, took the shortest road for Bristol, and in every town through which they passed were entertained with every mark of distinction. Their forces augmented daily until they arrived at Bristol, which they besieged. The king and the younger Hugh Despencer shut themselves up in the castle ; old Sir Hugh and the earl of Arundel remained in the town, but these the citizens delivered up soon after to the queen, who entered Bristol, accompanied by Sir John Hainault, with all her barons, knights, and squires. Sir Hugh Despencer, the elder, and the earl of Arundel, were delivered to the queen, that she might do what she pleased with them.

" The children of the queen were also brought to her, John of Eltham and her two daughters. As she had not seen them for a long time, this gave her great joy as well as all her party."

" The king, and the younger Despencer, shut up in the castle, were

<sup>1</sup> De la Moor.

<sup>2</sup> Walsingham. De la Moor.

<sup>3</sup> Thynne's MSS. Lives of the lord Treasurers. Collection of sir T. Phillipps.

much grieved at what passed, seeing the whole country turned to the queen's party.

"The queen then ordered old Sir Hugh and the earl of Arundel to be brought before her son and the barons assembled, and told them 'that she should see that law and justice were executed on them, according to their deeds.' Sir Hugh replied,

"Ah, madam; God grant us an upright judge and a just sentence! and that if we cannot find it in this world, we may find it in another.'"

The gallant old knight, when he made this reply, was ninety. He was speedily sentenced, and his execution took place on St. Denis's day, 1326, in sight of his son and the king, who were still safe in the castle of Bristol.

"It seems," says Froissart, "that the king and the younger Sir Hugh, intimidated by this execution, endeavoured to escape to the Welsh shore in a boat which they had behind the castle; but after tossing about some days, and striving in vain against the contrary winds, which drove them repeatedly back within a mile of the castle, from whence they were trying to escape, Sir Hugh Beaumont, observing the efforts of this unfortunate bark, rowed out with a strong force in his barge, to see who was in it. The king's exhausted boatmen were soon overtaken, and the consequence was, that the royal fugitive and his hapless favourite were brought back to Bristol, and delivered to the queen, as her prisoners." According to other historians, Edward fled to Wales, and took refuge among the monks of Neath; but his retreat was betrayed by Sir Thomas Blunt, the steward of his household.

Now the evil nature of Isabella of France blazed out in full view. Hitherto her beauty, her eloquence, and her complaints, had won all hearts towards her cause; but the touchstone of prosperity showed her natural character.

The queen and all the army set out for London. Sir Thomas Wager, the marshal of the queen's army, caused Sir Hugh Despencer to be fastened on the poorest and smallest horse he could find, clothed with a tabard, such as he was accustomed to wear, that is, with his arms, and the arms of Clare of Gloucester, in right of his wife, emblazoned on his surcoat, or dress of state. Thus was he led in derision, in the suite of the queen, through all the towns they passed, where he was announced by trumpets and cymbals, by way of greater mockery, till they reached Hereford, where she and her suite were joyfully and respectfully received, and where the feast of All Saints was celebrated by them with great solemnity.

The unfortunate Hugh Despencer would eat no food, from the moment he was taken prisoner, and becoming very faint, Isabella had him tried at Hereford, lest he should die before he reached London. Being nearly insensible when brought to trial, his diabolical persecutors had him crowned with nettles.<sup>1</sup> But he gave few signs of life. His miseries were ended by a death, accompanied with too many circumstances

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<sup>1</sup>Chronicle in Leland, written by sir W. Packington, treasurer to Edward the Black Prince.

of horror and cruelty to be more than alluded to here. He was executed at Hereford, in the stronghold of the power of Mortimer; some historians say that the queen was present at his execution.

The earl of Arundel, and two gentlemen named Daniel and Michel-dene, were beheaded previously at Hereford, to gratify the vindictive feelings of Mortimer, who cherished an especial animosity against them. Baldock, the chancellor, though protected by his priestly vocation, as bishop of Norwich, from the axe and the halter, derived little benefit from his clergy, since he was consigned to the tender mercies of Adam Orleton, through whose contrivance he was attacked by the London mob with such sanguinary fury, that he died of the injuries he received on his way to Newgate.<sup>1</sup>

Much of the cruel and perfidious spirit which characterized the conduct of Philip le Bel, in his ruthless dealings with the Knights Templars, may be traced in the proceedings of his daughter Isabella, at this period. She was, however, the popular idol of the English just then; and, as long as the national delusion lasted, she could do no wrong.

After these executions, the queen set out for London, accompanied by her son, her doughty champion, Sir John of Hainault, and her paramour Mortimer, her baronial partisans, and her foreign troops, while a motley levy of volunteers, who had accumulated on the road, followed in an almost interminable concourse. As they approached the metropolis, great crowds poured forth to welcome them; and the queen was hailed as the deliverer of the country. The citizens presented costly gifts to Isabella, also to some of her followers. We may suppose that Mortimer was not forgotten.<sup>2</sup>

Previously to her quitting Bristol, the queen summoned a parliament, in the king's name, to meet at Westminster, Dec. 15th, "in which Isabella, queen-consort, and Edward, son of the king, the guardian of the realm, and the lords, might treat together." This writ was tested by the prince, as guardian; but a new summons was issued for the meeting of parliament at the same place, on January 7th, to treat with the king himself, *if he were present*, or *else* with the queen consort and the king's son, guardian of the realm.

In this memorable parliament the misdemeanours of the absent sovereign were canvassed, his deposition was decreed, and his eldest son was elected to his office, and immediately proclaimed king in Westminster Hall, by the style and title of Edward III.

When the decision of her own faction was made known to Isabella, she burst into a passion of weeping,<sup>3</sup> and these counterfeit tears so wrought upon the generous unsuspecting nature of her son, that he made a solemn vow not to accept the offered crown of England, unless it were his royal father's pleasure voluntarily to resign it to him.

Isabella had overacted her part; and her party were a little disconcerted at the virtuous resolution of the princely boy, as they had never dreamed of making the consent of the king, to his own deposition, a

<sup>1</sup> Walsingham. De la Moor.

<sup>2</sup> Rolls of Parliament. Brady, Riley, &c.

<sup>3</sup> Walsingham.

preliminary to the inauguration of his successor; but they found nothing less would satisfy the young Edward, as to the lawfulness of his title to the throne.

The unhappy king had already been compelled to resign the great seal, to the delegates of his queen and parliament, at Monmouth castle. Adam Orleton, the traitor bishop of Hereford, was the person employed by the queen to demand it; and as the king quiescently resigned it to him, he was deputed, with twelve other commissioners, to require the unfortunate monarch to abdicate his royal dignity, by delivering up his crown, sceptre, and the rest of the regalia, into their hands.

The commissioners proceeded on their ungracious errand to Kenilworth Castle, where the king was kept as a state prisoner, but with honourable treatment, by his noble captor, Henry of Lancaster. The pitiless traitor Orleton was the spokesman,<sup>1</sup> and vented the insatiable malice of his heart, in a series of the bitterest insults against his fallen sovereign,<sup>2</sup> under the pretence of demonstrating the propriety of depriving him of a dignity of which he had proved himself unworthy.

Edward listened to the mortifying detail of the errors of his life and government, with floods of tears;<sup>3</sup> and when Orleton enlarged on the favour shown him, by the magnates of his kingdom, in choosing his son for his successor, instead of conferring the crown on a stranger, he meekly acknowledged it to be such, and withdrew to prepare himself for the resignation of the outward symbols of sovereignty.<sup>4</sup>

De la Moor, the faithful servant of Edward II., gives a pathetic account of the scene in the presence-chamber at Kenilworth Castle, where the commissioners, in the presence of Henry Plantagenet, earl of Leicester, the earl of Lancaster's eldest son, were drawn up, in formal array, by Orleton, to renounce their homage to king Edward, and to receive his personal abdication of the royal dignity. After a long pause, the unfortunate prince came forth from an inner apartment, clad in mourning weeds, or, as the chronicler expresses it, "gowned in black," the late struggle of his soul being sufficiently denoted by the sadness of his features; but on entering the presence of his obdurate subjects, he sank down in a deep swoon, and lay stretched upon the earth as one dead. The earl of Leicester and the bishop of Winchester immediately flew to his assistance, and, raising him in their arms, with some tenderness supported him. After much trouble, they succeeded in restoring their unhappy master to a consciousness of his misery.<sup>5</sup> "As piteous and heavy as this sight was," continues the chronicler, "it failed to excite the compassion of any other of the queen's commissioners. Scarcely, indeed, had the king recovered from his indisposition, before the relentless Orleton, regardless of the agony he had inflicted, proceeded to a repetition of his cruel insults."

The king gave way to a fresh paroxysm of weeping; and being much pressed for his decision, he at length replied, that "he was aware that

<sup>1</sup> De la Moor. Knighton.

<sup>2</sup> Walsingham. Rapin.

<sup>3</sup> De la Moor. Walsingham.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> De la Moor.

<sup>5</sup> De la Moor. Walsingham.

for his many sins he was thus punished, and therefore he besought those present to have compassion upon him in his adversity ;” adding, “ that much as he grieved for having incurred the hatred of his people, he was glad that his eldest son was so gracious in their sight, and gave them thanks for choosing him to be their king.”<sup>1</sup>

The ceremony of abdication, in this instance, it seems, consisted chiefly in the king’s surrender of the crown, sceptre, orb, and other ensigns of royalty, for the use of his son and successor.

Sir William Trussell, the same judge who pronounced sentence of death on the Despencers, and other adherents of the king, and whose appearance among the commissioners of the queen and parliament had probably caused the king’s swoon, pronounced the renunciation of homage.

The chief faults of Edward II. appear to have been errors of judgment and levity of deportment. He is accused of having made a party on the Thames in a returned fagot-*barge*, and of buying cabbages of the gardeners on the banks of the river, to make his soup ;—a harmless frolic, which might have increased the popularity of a greater sovereign. Edward was, however, too much addicted to the pleasures of the table, and is said to have given way to habits of intemperance.

From an old French MS., we find that he paid Jack of St. Alban, his painter, for dancing on the table before him, and making him laugh excessively.<sup>2</sup> Another person he rewarded for diverting him, by his droll fashion of tumbling off his horse. The worst charge of all is, that he was wont to play at chuck-farthing, or tossing up farthings for heads and tails ; a very unkingly diversion certainly, and sufficient to disgust the warlike peers, who had been accustomed to rally round the victorious banner of the mighty father of this grown-up baby.

Adversity appears to have had a hallowing influence on the character of Edward II. ; and the following touching lines written by him in Latin, during his captivity, sufficiently denote that he was learned, and possessed reflective powers and a poetic imagination :—

“ On my devoted head  
Her bitterest showers,  
All from a wintry cloud,  
Stern fortune pours.  
View but her favourite<sup>3</sup>  
Sage and discerning,

Graced with fair comeliness,  
Famed for his learning ;  
Should she withdraw her smiles,  
Each grace she banishes,  
Wisdom and wit are flown,  
And beauty vanishes.<sup>4</sup>

As soon as the commissioners returned to London with the regalia, and signified the abdication of the late sovereign to the queen and the parliament, the prince of Wales was publicly proclaimed king on the 20th of January, 1327, and Walter, archbishop of Canterbury, preached

<sup>1</sup> De la Moor. Walsingham. Polydore Vergil.

<sup>2</sup> J. P. Andrews. Collections from the Chronicles.

<sup>3</sup> Supposed to mean Mortimer.

<sup>4</sup> These lines are translated by J. P. Andrews, from the original Latin, preserved in Alderman Fabian’s Chronicle :

“ *Dannum mihi contuit  
Tempore brumali,*” &c. &c.

a sermon in Westminster Abbey, preparatory to the coronation, taking for his text, not any verse from scripture, but the words, *Vox populi, vox Dei*.

The queen judged it prudent to detain her sworn champion, Sir John de Hainault, and as many of his stout Flemings as he could induce to remain in her service, till after the coronation of the young king, who had completed his fifteenth year in the preceding November. He received knighthood from the sword of his cousin, the earl of Lancaster, assisted by sir John Hainault on this occasion.

"There was, at this time," says Froissart, "a great number of countesses and noble ladies attendant on the queen Isabella. The queen gave leave to many of her household to return to their country-seats, except a few nobles whom she kept with her as her council. She expressly ordered them to come back at Christmas, to a great court which she proposed to hold. When Christmas came, she held her court; it was very fully attended by all the nobles and prelates of the realm, as well as by the principal officers of the great cities and towns. The young king Edward, since so fortunate in arms, was crowned with the royal diadem in Westminster, on Christmas-day, 1326."

The most remarkable feature at this coronation was the hypocritical demeanour of the queen-mother Isabella, who, though she had been the principal cause of her husband's deposition, affected to weep during the whole of the ceremony.<sup>1</sup>

Sir John de Hainault and all his companions, noble or otherwise, were much feasted, and had many rich jewels given them at the coronation. He remained during these grand feasts, to the great satisfaction of the lords and ladies who were there, until Twelfth-day. Then the king, by the advice of the queen, gave him an annuity of 400 marks, to be held by him in fee, payable in the city of Bruges; and to the countess of Garennes, and some other ladies who had accompanied the queen Isabella to England, king Edward III. gave many rich jewels, on their taking leave.

With a view of increasing the unpopularity of her unhappy lord, Isabella wrote to the pope on the last day of February, 1326, requesting him to canonize the beheaded earl of Lancaster, her uncle, whose virtues she greatly extolled.<sup>2</sup>

The parliament, immediately after the coronation, appointed a council of regency for the guardianship of the youthful sovereign and the realm, consisting of twelve bishops and peers. Among these were the king's two uncles, Thomas of Brotherton, earl marshal, and Edmund of Woodstock, earl of Kent, and the archbishops of Canterbury and York, &c. &c. The earl of Lancaster was appointed the president.

The queen made no remonstrance against this arrangement, but, having military power in her own hands, she seized the government, and made Roger Mortimer (whom she had caused her son to create earl of March) her prime minister, and Adam Orleton her principal counsellor.<sup>3</sup> This

<sup>1</sup> Planche's Hist. of Coronations.

<sup>2</sup> Brady's Hist., p. 138. and Appendix, No. 64, 66. Rapin, 397.

<sup>3</sup> Walsingham. De la Moor.

precious trio managed the affairs of the kingdom between them. After this arrangement, Isabella, hitherto the most accomplished of dissimulators, threw off the mask, and, with the sanction of a parliament made up of her partisans, appropriated to herself a dower exceeding two-thirds of the revenues of the kingdom.

The Easter following brought an invasion from the Scots, headed by the heroic king Robert Bruce, and the queen invited her champion, sir John Hainault, to assist in repulsing this invasion. At Whitsuntide, sir John, and a number of mercenary troops, arrived in England, but were very ill received by the populace, as the following narration will show.

"The queen held a great court on Trinity Sunday, at the house of the Black Friars, but she and her son were lodged in the city, where each kept their lodgings separate, the young king with his knights, and the queen with her ladies, whose numbers were very considerable. At this court the king had five hundred knights, and dubbed fifteen new ones. The queen gave her entertainment in the dormitory, where at least sixty ladies, whom she had invited to entertain sir John de Hainault and his suite, sat down to the table. There might be seen a numerous nobility, well served with plenty of strange dishes, so disguised that it could not be known what they were. There were also ladies most superbly dressed, who were expecting with impatience the hour of the ball, but they expected in vain. Soon after dinner, the guests were suddenly alarmed by a furious fray, which commenced among the grooms of the Hainault knights and the English archers, who lodged with them in the suburbs. The Hainault knights, their masters, who were at the queen's banquet, hearing the bruit of the affray, rushed to their quarters. Those that could not enter them were exposed to great danger, for the archers, to the number of three thousand, shot both at masters and grooms. It was supposed that this affray was contrived by the friends of the Despencers, in revenge for their being put to death through the advice of sir John Hainault." This fray effectually broke up Isabella's magnificent Sunday ball at Blackfriars.

Meantime, the deposed sovereign, Edward II., continued to write from his prison the most passionate letters of entreaty to Isabella to be permitted to see her and their son; he was encouraged, perhaps, by the presents which (according to Walsingham) she occasionally sent him, of fine apparel, linen, and other trifling articles, accompanied by deceitful messages, expressing solicitude for his health and comforts, and lamenting that she was not permitted by the parliament to visit him.<sup>1</sup> Nothing was, however, further from the heart of Isabella than feelings of tenderness or compassion for her hapless lord. The moment she learned that her uncle, Henry of Lancaster, had relented from his long cherished animosity against his fallen sovereign, and was beginning to treat him with kindness and respect, she removed him from Kenilworth, and gave him into the charge of the brutal ruffians, sir John Maltravers and sir Thomas Gurney, who had hearts to plan and hands to execute any crime for which their agency might be required :

<sup>1</sup> Walsingham. De la Moor. Rapin. Speed.

"Such tools the Tempter never needs  
To do the savagest of deeds."

By this pair the royal victim was conducted, under a strong guard, first to Corfe Castle, and then to Bristol, where public sympathy operated so far in his favour that a project was formed by the citizens for his deliverance. When this was discovered, the associate-traitors, Gurney and Maltravers, hurried him to Berkeley Castle, which was destined to be his last resting-place. On the road thither, he was treated in the most barbarous manner by his unfeeling guards, who took fiend-like delight in augmenting his misery, by depriving him of sleep, compelling him to ride in thin clothing in the chilly April nights, and crowning him with hay, in mockery.<sup>1</sup>

According to De la Moor, the queen's mandate for the murder of her royal husband was conveyed in that memorable Latin distich from the subtle pen of Adam Orleton, the master-fiend of her cabinet; it is capable, by the alteration of a comma, of being read with two directly opposite meanings:

"Edwardum occidere nolite timere, bonum est.  
Edwardum occidere nolite, timere bonum est."

"Edward to kill fear not, the deed is good.  
Edward kill not, to fear the deed is good."

Maurice de Berkeley, the lord of the castle, on the first arrival of the unhappy Edward, had treated him with so much courtesy and respect, that he was not only denied access to him, but deprived of all power in his own house.

On the night of the 22d of September, 1327, exactly a twelvemonth after the return of the queen to England, the murder of her unfortunate husband was perpetrated, with circumstances of the greatest horror. No

<sup>1</sup> De la Moor adds, with great indignation, that they made him shave in the open field, bringing him cold muddy water in an old helmet, from a stagnant ditch, for that purpose. On which the unfortunate Edward passionately observed, in allusion to the bitter tears which overflowed his cheeks at this wanton cruelty, "In spite of you, I shall be shaved with warm water." The excellence of Edward's constitution disappointing the systematic attempts of the queen's merciless agents, either to kill him with sorrow, or by broken rest, improper diet, and unwholesome air, they applied to Mortimer for fresh orders, it being well known that the whole body of the friars-preachers were labouring not only for his deliverance, but his restoration to royal power. The influence of this fraternity was calculated to awaken the sympathies of every village in England in favour of their deposed sovereign, whose patience and meekness under his afflictions and persecutions had already pleaded his cause in every heart not wholly dead to the tender impulses of compassion. It is supposed the sudden idea of shaving the king originated in the fear of his being recognised by his partisans on the journey.

<sup>2</sup> A modern biographer of this prelate, with some degree of plausibility, endeavours to acquit him of this crime, on the grounds that the equivocal Latin verses, quoted by so many English authors, were composed more than a century prior to this era, by an archbishop of Strimonium, with reference to Gertrude queen of Hungary, and also that Orleton was out of the kingdom at the time of Edward II.'s murder; but there is no reason why he should not have altered and adapted the lines for this purpose.



outward marks of violence were perceptible on his person, when the body was exposed to public view in Gloucester cathedral, but the rigid and distorted lines of the face bore evidence of the agonies he had undergone, and it is reported that his cries had been heard at a considerable distance from the castle, where this barbarous regicide was committed. "Many a one woke," adds the narrator, "and prayed to God for the harmless soul, which that night was departing in torture."<sup>1</sup>

The public indignation, in that part of the country, was so greatly excited against the infamous instruments of the queen and Mortimer, that they were fain to make their escape beyond seas, to avoid the vengeance of the people.<sup>2</sup>

The murdered king was interred, without funeral pomp, in Gloucester cathedral, and Isabella endeavoured, by the marriage festivities of her son and his young queen, to dissipate the general gloom, which the suspicious circumstances attending the death of her unhappy consort had occasioned. But so universal was the feeling of disgust which the conduct of the queen and her favourite Mortimer excited, that nothing but the despotism she had succeeded in establishing, enabled her to keep possession of her usurped power.<sup>3</sup>

The pacification with Scotland gave great offence to the public, because Isabella bartered for twenty thousand pounds, the claims of the king of England over Scotland, and Mortimer appropriated the money to his own use. By the same treaty they restored the regalia of Scotland to their rightful owners; the English were indignant, that in this regalia, was comprised the famous Black Cross of St. Margaret, which had been one of the crown jewels of their Anglo-Saxon kings.<sup>4</sup> Still more were they enraged, that, without sanction of parliament, the queen concluded a marriage between the princess Joanna, an infant five years old, and David Bruce, the heir of Scotland, who was about two years older. She accompanied her young daughter to Berwick, attended by Mortimer, and, in their presence, the royal children were married at that town, July 12, 1328.<sup>5</sup>

It was observed that the two brothers of the late king, Thomas of Brotherton and Edmund earl of Kent, and Isabella's own uncle, the earl of Lancaster, with some other magnates, had withdrawn themselves from the national council, in utter indignation at the late proceedings of the queen, and the insolence of her favourite Mortimer. They perceived, too late, that they had been made the tools of an artful, ambitious, and vindictive woman, who, under the pretence of reforming the abuses of

<sup>1</sup> These were the words of De la Moor, the faithful and affectionate servant of Edward II., who did justice to his master's memory in his pathetic Latin chronicle. Edward III. afterwards raised a tomb with a fine effigy to his father's memory.

<sup>2</sup> Three years afterwards, Gurney was seized at Burgos by king Edward III.'s orders, and beheaded at sea, on his voyage to England, in order to prevent as it has been supposed, the disgrace which must have fallen on the queen-dowager if her share in the murder of the late king, her husband, had been brought to light at his trial.

<sup>3</sup> De la Moor. Walsingham.

<sup>4</sup> See the biography of Matilda of Scotland, vol. i.

<sup>5</sup> The Scotch called their future queen, in derision, Joan Make-peace.

her husband's government, had usurped the sovereign authority, and in one year committed more crimes than the late king and his unpopular ministers together, had perpetrated during the twenty years of his reign.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the barbarous persecutions, and cruel death, of their late sovereign made the princes recoil with horror, at the idea of their having been, in some measure, accomplices in the guilt of the queen.

Mortimer had even had the audacity, when parliament met at Salisbury, October 16, to enter the town at the head of an army; and, bursting into the room where the prelates were assembled, forbade them, under peril of life and limb, to oppose his interests. He then seized on the young king and queen, and carried them off to Winchester; and, far from paying any regard to the earl of Lancaster's complaints, of the infringement of his office, of guardian to the king's person, he marched to Leicester, and plundered his domain there.<sup>2</sup>

Isabella's cruelty, her hypocrisy, and the unnatural manner in which she rendered the interests of the young king, her son, subservient to the aggrandizement of her ferocious paramour, Mortimer, excited the indignation of all classes; and a strong party was organized, under the auspices of the Plantagenet princes, for the delivering of the nation from the tyranny of this modern Semiramis. The earl of Lancaster, who was by this time fully aware of the disposition of his vindictive kinswoman, perceived that he was intended for her next victim; on which he, with the brothers of the late king, and their confederates, took up arms, and put forth a manifesto containing eight articles, all alarming to the guilty queen and Mortimer, especially the first clause, which threatened inquiry into the unlawful augmentations of her dower; and the fifth, regarding the late king's death.<sup>3</sup> The queen mother, aware of the impossibility of meeting such inquiries before parliament, urged the young king to attack the malcontents; assuring him that the object of his uncle was to deprive him of the throne.<sup>4</sup>

The interference of the archbishop of Canterbury prevented another civil war, and through his exertions a hollow pacification was effected between Isabella and the princes. It was not, however, in the nature of this princess to forgive any offence that had ever been offered to her; and it is to be observed, that her enmity had hitherto always proved fatal to every person who had been so unfortunate as to incur her ill will. With the wariness of a cat, she now examined the characteristic qualities of the members of the royal family, whom she determined to attack separately, since she had found them too strong to engage collectively. She commenced with the earl of Kent, who had, ever since the death of the king, his brother, suffered the greatest remorse for the part he had taken in the late revolution.

Isabella, being aware of his state of mind, caused it to be insinuated to him that the late sovereign, his brother, was not dead, but a prisoner

<sup>1</sup> Walsingham. De la Moor. Knighton.

<sup>2</sup> Lingard.

<sup>3</sup> Knighton.

<sup>4</sup> Lancaster was compelled to ask pardon, to submit to an enormous fine, and to enter into recognizances not to do any evil or injury to the king, the two queens, or any of their household or council, whether great or small.—Lingard

within the walls of Corfe Castle. A friar, whom the earl employed to inquire into the truth of this tale, on finding that every one in that neighbourhood confidently believed that the unfortunate Edward II. was living, under very close restraint, in the castle, endeavoured to obtain access to this mysterious captive: he was shown, at a distance, a person sitting at table, whose air and figure greatly resembled that of the deceased king, whom, indeed, he was meant to personate. The earl of Kent, anxious to make reparation to his royal brother for the injuries he had done him, hastened to Corfe Castle, and boldly demanded of the governor "to be conducted to the apartment of sir Edward of Caernarvon, his brother." The governor did not deny that king Edward was in the castle, but protested the impossibility of permitting any one to see him. The earl then prevailed on him to take charge of a letter for his illustrious prisoner. This letter was immediately conveyed to queen Isabella, and used by her as a pretence for the arrest of the deluded prince.<sup>1</sup>

This was done at Winchester, where the parliament was then assembled. Earl Edmund was impeached of high treason, before the peers. His own letter was the chief evidence produced against him, together with his confession, in which he acknowledged "that a certain friar-preacher of London told him he had conjured up a spirit, who assured him that his brother Edward was still alive; also, that sir Ingram Berenger brought him a letter from the lord Zouche, requesting his assistance in the restoration of his late sovereign."<sup>2</sup>

For this impossible treason he was sentenced to lose his head.<sup>3</sup> His arraignment took place on Sunday, March 13, 1329, (Isabella's Sundays being no holidays,) and he was condemned to die on the morrow. "All that day," says the chroniclers, "the king was so beset by the queen his mother and the earl of March, that it was impossible for him to make any efforts to preserve his uncle from the cruel fate to which he had been so unjustly doomed."<sup>4</sup>

This murder, which was designed by Isabella as an intimidation to the princes of the blood-royal, had the effect of increasing the abhorrence in which she was now held throughout the kingdom. The queen presented Mortimer's son, Geoffrey, grants of the principal part of the estates of the princely victim.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Walsingham.

<sup>2</sup> Public Acts.

<sup>3</sup> Walsingham.

<sup>4</sup> See the chronicler in Leland, vol. ii. p. 477, who deeply implicates Isabella in this misdeed. It inspired all people with horror. The executioner himself stole secretly away, and the earl of Kent waited on the scaffold at Winchester castle-gate from noon till five in the afternoon, because no one could be induced to perform that office. At length a condemned felon, in the Marshalsea, obtained his pardon on the condition of decapitating the unfortunate Plantagenet.

<sup>5</sup> After this execution, Mortimer augmented his own retinue considerably, and affected all the pomp and consequence of princely rank. He had a hundred and eighty knights in his establishment, and never moved without a prodigious train of followers. He held so many round tables, a species of festival peculiar to his family, in imitation of king Arthur's chivalric institution, and assumed so much importance in his demeanour, that even his son Geoffrey called

The death of Charles le Bel, without male issue, having left Isabella the sole surviving child of Philip le Bel, her eldest son, Edward III., considered that he had the best claim to the sovereignty of France. The twelve peers of France decided otherwise, and gave, first the regency, and then (on the birth of the posthumous daughter of Charles le Bel) the throne, to Philip of Valois, the cousin of their late king. Edward was eager to assert his claim, as the nephew of that monarch and the grandson of Philip le Bel; but his mother, deceived by overtures from France for a double marriage, between her daughter Eleanor and the heir of Valois, and her second son and Philip's daughter, not only prevented him from asserting his own claims, but compelled him, sorely against his will, to acknowledge those of his rival, by performing homage for the provinces held of the French crown.

Edward returned from his last conference with king Philip at Amiens, out of humour with himself, and still more so with his mother. The evil odour in which Isabella's reputation was generally held, both at home and abroad, though perhaps concealed from him in his own court, (where he was as yet but a state puppet, surrounded by her creatures,) was conveyed to him through a variety of channels, as soon as he was beyond the limits of her usurped authority.<sup>1</sup> The pride, the cruelty, and insolence of Mortimer were represented to the king by his faithful friends, with other circumstances, tending to convince him of the infamy of the queen-mother's connexion with that favourite. Edward was sensibly touched when informed of these things, and determined no longer to be a quiescent witness of his mother's dishonour.

The parliament was summoned to meet at Nottingham a fortnight after Michaelmas, and the youthful sovereign considered that it would be a favourable time for the arrest of his mother's paramour, when all the barons of England were assembled round him in support of his royal authority. Edward had intended to take up his abode in Nottingham Castle, one of his own royal palaces; but Isabella, forestalling his design, had already established herself there, with Mortimer and his strong guard of armed followers. Isabella had used the precaution of ordering the keys of the castle to be brought to her, and at night, for greater security, she placed them under her pillow.<sup>2</sup>

The particulars of this most interesting crisis are best related in the words of the lively chronicler, from whom Stow has taken his graphic narrative of the arrest of the queen and her lover.

"There was a parliament, where Roger Mortimer was in such glory and honour that it was without all comparison; no man durst name him other than earl of March; and a greater rout of men waited at his heels, than on the king's person. He would suffer the king to rise to him; and would walk with him equally, step by step, and cheek by cheek, never preferring the king, but would go foremost himself with his officers. He greatly rebuked the earl of Lancaster, cousin to the

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him, when speaking of him, "the king of folly." In fact, he exceeded Gaveston in soppery, and the Despenchers in pride and cruelty.—*Dugdale*.

<sup>1</sup> Knighton. Walsingham.

<sup>2</sup> Knighton. Carte.

king, for that without his consent he appointed certain noblemen to lodgings in the town, asking, 'Who made him so bold to take up his lodgings close to the queen?' With which words, the constable, being greatly *feared* (alarmed), appointed lodgings for the earl of Lancaster a full mile out of the town, where was lodged John Bohun, the earl of Hereford, lord high constable of England; by which means a great contention arose among the noblemen and the common people, who called Roger Mortimer 'the queen's paragon and the king's master, who destroys the king's blood and usurps the regal majesty.' All this troubled the king's friends; and William Montague, and others, drew to them Robert de Holland, keeper of Nottingham Castle, unto whom all secret corners of the same were known. Then, on a certain night, the king lying without the castle, both he and his friends were brought, by torch-light, through a secret way underground, beginning far from that castle, till they came even to the queen's chamber, which they by chance found open; they, being armed with naked swords in their hands, went forwards, leaving the king armed without the chamber-door, lest his mother should espy him. They entered in, slew sir Hugh Turpington, who resisted them; and to John Neville they gave a deadly wound. From thence they went to the queen-mother, whom they found with the earl of March, just ready to go to bed; and, having seized the said earl, they led him into the hall, the queen following, crying out, '*Bel filz, ayez pitié de gentle Mortimer;*' for she knew her son was there, though she saw him not. She likewise entreated Montague and his people 'to do no harm to the person of Mortimer, because he was a worthy knight, her dear friend and well-beloved cousin.' No reply was made to her intercession, and Mortimer was hurried away, the castle locked on the queen, and all her effects sealed up. The next morning Roger Mortimer and his friends were led prisoners towards London. As soon as they appeared the populace of Nottingham and the nobles of the king's party set up a tremendous shout, the earl of Lancaster, who was at that time blind, joining in the outcry, and making violent gesticulations for joy. On his arrival in London, Mortimer was for a few hours committed to the Tower, previous to his summary execution."<sup>1</sup>

Froissart, after relating very briefly the execution of the earl of Kent, which he attributes to the queen-mother and Mortimer, proceeds to say:—

"Not long after, great infamy fell upon the queen-mother; whether with just cause or not I am ignorant, but in this the lord Mortimer was inculpated. The king then ordered him to be arrested and brought to London, and before him and a very great number of the barons and nobles of the realm, a knight, by the king's command, recited the deeds of the lord Mortimer, from a declaration he held in his hand. Every one was then asked, by way of counsel, what sentence should be given. Judgment was soon given; for each had perfect knowledge of the facts, from good report and information. They replied to the king's question, that he ought to suffer the same death as sir Hugh de Spencer the

<sup>1</sup> Stowe's Chronicle.

younger, which sentence had neither delay nor mercy. This was instantly carried into effect, without waiting to hear what the accused had to say in his own vindication."

Sir Simon Burford and John Deverel, who were taken in the queen's antechamber at Nottingham Castle, earnestly desired to disclose the particulars of Edward II.'s murder, but were not permitted to disburthen their consciences of their guilty knowledge, lest they should too deeply implicate the queen-mother.

Mortimer was the first person executed at Tyburn, which was then known by the name of the Elms. Burford and Deverel were executed with him. His body hung on the gallows at Tyburn two days and nights, by the especial order of the king; it was then taken down and buried in the Grey Friars' church, within Newgate, of which queen Isabella was a benefactress.<sup>1</sup>

Isabella was spared the ignominy of a public trial, through the intercession of the pope, John XXII., who wrote to the young king, exhorting him not to expose his mother's shame.<sup>2</sup> After this, Edward attributed all her crimes to the evil influence of Mortimer, as may be seen in the royal declaration to parliament of the reasons which induced him to inflict the punishment of death on that great state criminal. In the ninth article of this posthumous arraignment it is set forth that,

"The said Roger falsely and maliciously sowed discord between the father of our lord the king and the queen his companion, making her believe that if she came near her husband he would poignard her, or murder her in some other manner. Wherefore, by this cause, and by other subtleties, the said queen remained absent from her said lord, to *'the great dishonour of the king and of the said queen his mother, and great damage, perhaps, of the whole nation hereafter, which God avert.'*"<sup>3</sup>

One of the first acts of the emancipated monarch, after the gallant achievement by which he had rendered himself master of his own realm, was to strip the queen-mother of the unconscionable dower to which she had helped herself, and to reduce her income to 1000*l.* a year.<sup>4</sup> It was also judged expedient by his council to confine her to one of the royal fortresses at some distance from the metropolis, lest by her intriguing disposition she should excite fresh troubles in the realm.

Froissart, after relating the particulars of Mortimer's death, adds, "The king soon after, by the advice of his council, ordered his mother to be confined in a goodly castle, and gave her plenty of ladies to wait upon her, as well as knights and squires of honour. He made her a handsome allowance to keep and maintain the state to which she had been accustomed,<sup>5</sup> but forbade her ever to go out or show herself abroad,

<sup>1</sup> Knighton. De la Moor. Walsingham. Stow. There is a precept in the *Fœdera*, permitting the wife and son of Mortimer to bury his body at Wigmore; but, according to Weever, the transfer was not made till the next century.

<sup>2</sup> Raynuld, iv. 413, quoted by Dr. Lingard, vol. iv. p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> 4 Edward III., anno 1330; Par. Rolls, p. 53.

<sup>4</sup> Knighton. Walsingham.  
<sup>5</sup> In the year 1332, Edward declares that his mother has *simply and spontaneously* given into his hands all the castles and estates which formed her dower;

except at certain times, and when any shows were exhibited in the court of the castle.<sup>1</sup>

Castle Rising, in Norfolk, was the place where queen Isabella was destined to spend the long years of her widowhood. It had belonged to the Albinis, from whom it passed to the lords of Montalt; the widow of the last baron of that line had surrendered it to queen Isabella, during her regency, for an annuity of 400*l.* per annum.

It was a noble pile, built, in 1176, by William Albin, husband to queen Adelicia. It was constructed in the manner of Norwich Castle, on a bold eminence surrounded by a high bank and deep vallum. The walls were three yards thick; the keep was a large square tower, encompassed with a deep ditch and bold rampart, on which was a strong wall with three towers. Enough remains to show that Castle Rising must have been a most formidable, if not an impregnable, fortress.<sup>2</sup>

Froissart says, "The queen passed her time there meekly;" by which our readers are to understand that she neither devised plots nor treasons against the government of her illustrious son, Edward III., and gave no further cause for public scandal.

More than one ancient historian hints that, during her long confinement, Isabella was afflicted with occasional fits of derangement.<sup>3</sup> It is asserted that these aberrations commenced in a violent access of madness, which seized her while the body of Mortimer hung on the gallows. Her agonies were so severe, that, among the common people, the report prevailed for some months that she died, at the time the body was taken down. These traditions lead us to conclude that for many months the populace did not know what had become of her. Her retired life, unconnected with conventual vows, must have strengthened the reports of

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in return he has assigned his mother divers other lands and castles of the value of 2000*l.* per annum: these are chiefly in North Wales, and the castle of Haverford, with its island, mill, and appurtenance, in South Wales: the rest of the grants are mere annuities payable from various royal demesnes. — *Calcy's Fœdera*, p. 835.

<sup>1</sup> We have here an allusion to the customs of those times, when travelling shows were the only theatrical exhibition in use, and much encouraged by the magnates of the land. The courts of royal and baronial castles were built with galleries round them for the convenience of the family witnessing these attractive spectacles: the principal hostels were built in a similar manner for the same purpose.

<sup>2</sup> The keep of Castle Rising is not wholly dilapidated; the great hall is still used for court-leet. It now belongs to the hon. Mrs. Greville Howard, one of the descendants of the great Albin, the original founder. The remains of this castle, so noted for its historical reminiscences, have been, by the fine taste of the hon. Col. Howard, partly restored; the principal staircase has been repaired, and two rooms rendered habitable.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Winston Churchill mentions this tradition as a fact; Moreri hints at it. These reports are somewhat strengthened by the extravagant salary paid to her family physician at Rising Castle. In the *Fœdera* is a deed securing "100*l.* per annum to master Pontio de Courtrone, late physician to king Edward II., and now to the queen-mother, Isabella; the bailiffs of Norwich are enjoined to pay him 50*l.* at Easter and at Michaelmas, as long as he lives, for his great services to the queen-mother." The document is dated 1233.

her derangement, which was attributed to the horrors of conscience. She was in her six-and-thirtieth year when her seclusion at Castle Rising commenced.

The king her son generally, when in England, visited her twice or thrice a year,<sup>1</sup> and never permitted any one to name her in his presence otherwise than with the greatest respect. It is to be observed that Edward's council, in regard to the petitions of certain individuals for the recovery of money due to them during her government, are by him referred to the advice of queen Isabella. Her name is carefully guarded from all reproach in the rolls of parliament, which nevertheless abound in disputes relative to her regency.

There is one petition, from the poor lieges of the forest of Macclesfield to king Edward, declaring that "Madame his mother holds the forest as her heritage, and yet the bailiff of Macclesfield kills her venison and destroys her wood." Isabella is not named as queen, but only as madame the king's mother: the king replies, "Let this petition be shown to the queen, that her advice may be learned thereon."

During the two first years of Isabella's residence at Castle Rising, her seclusion appears most rigorous; but, in 1332, from various notations, the fact may be gathered that her condition was ameliorated. That year king Edward declared,<sup>2</sup> "that, as his dearest mother had simply and spontaneously surrendered her dower into his hands, he has assigned her divers other castles and lands to the amount of 2000*l*." The same year this dower was settled she was permitted to make a pilgrimage to the Lady shrine of Walsingham, not far from her residence in Norfolk. This is evidenced from the ancient Latin records of the corporation of Lynn,<sup>3</sup> which is in the neighbourhood of Castle Rising. There is an entry of 20*s*. for bread sent to Isabella, queen-dowager, when she came from Walsingham; also 4*l*. for a cask of wine, 3*l*. 18*s*. 6*d*. for a piece of wax, and 2*l*. for barley; also 3*s*. for the carriage of these purchases.

King Edward restored to his mother, two years afterwards, the revenues of Ponthieu and Montrieul, which were originally the gift of her murdered lord. The same year, 1334, her son, John of Eltham, died in the bloom of life, and her daughter, Eleanor, was married to the duke of Gueldres;<sup>4</sup> Edward III. likewise visited his mother at Risings: the records of Lynn return this notice, dated 1334. "The queen Isabella sent her precept to the mayor to provide her eight carpenters, to make preparations for the king's visit." In 1337, Edward III. again made some stay at Castle Rising with his mother, and Adam de Riffham, of Lynn, sent him a present of wine on this occasion. Once only have we evidence that Isabella visited the metropolis; this was in the twelfth year of her son's reign, when she is witness to the delivery, of the great seal in its purse, by king Edward to Robert de Burghersh, in the grand chamber of the bishop of Winchester's palace in Southwark.

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.

<sup>2</sup> Caley's *Fœdera*, 835.

<sup>3</sup> We have been favoured with these extracts by the hon. Mrs. Greville Howard; they are of historical importance, since they set at rest all doubts regarding the fact of Isabella's residence at Castle Rising.

<sup>4</sup> See succeeding memoir.



Parliament granted to Edward III. an aid of 30,000 sacks of wool; and by a writ, dated Feb. 27, 1343, the barons of the exchequer were forbidden to levy any part from the lands and manors of the queen-mother, "because it was unreasonable that a person exempt and not summoned to parliament should be burthened with aids granted by parliament."<sup>1</sup> The same year Isabella received another visit from the king her son; on this occasion the Lynn records note that 11*l.* 13*s.* 10*d.* was expended for meat sent to "our lady queen Isabella." There is an item of 4*l.* 16*s.* 1*d.*, paid by the corporation, for a present sent to the household of our lord the king, at Thorndenes, at his first coming to Rising, and 3*d.* for a horse sent by a messenger to Rising. The corporation also is answerable for 12*d.* given to William of Lakenham, the falcon-bearer at Risings, 4*s.* 3*d.* given to the messengers and minstrels of queen Isabella, 2*s.* 8*d.* for wine sent to the queen's maid, and 12*d.*, a largess for the earl of Suffolk's minstrels. Barrelled sturgeon was a favourite food at the queen's table, and it was certainly very costly, when compared with the price of other viands. The corporation of Lynn the same year sent gifts of a pipe of wine and a barrel of sturgeon, costing together 9*l.* 12*s.* 9*d.*, to their lady, queen Isabella; and, moreover, paid John, the butcher, money for conveying the said gifts to Castle Rising. They sent to her treasurer and seneschal gifts of wine that cost 40*d.*, and presented 12*s.* to John de Wyndsore and other men of the king's family, when at Rising; besides 2*d.* given to a servant looking for strayed horses from the castle; likewise 40*d.* given to the steward of Rising, when he came to obtain horses, for the use of king Edward. A barrel of sturgeon cost as much as 2*l.* 15*s.*; the men of Lynn note that they paid 11*l.* for four barrels sent at different times, as gifts to the queen at Castle Rising, and 20*s.* for two quarter-barrels of sturgeon sent by her servant Perote. The supply of herrings, as gifts from the men of Lynn, amounted to 6*l.*, and they sent her 103 quarters of wax, at a cost of 4*l.* 16*s.* 1*d.* In the eighteenth year of his reign king Edward dates several letters to the pope from Castle Rising.

A curious plan for the annoyance of king Edward was devised, in the year 1348, by the French monarch, who proposed to make the queen-dowager of France and Isabella, the mediatrices of a peace. They were to meet between Calais and Boulogne; but Edward was too wise, to fall into the snare of attracting public attention to the guilty and degraded mother, from whom his claims to the throne of France were derived. Isabella was not suffered to take any part in the negotiation: the succeeding documents prove that the treaty was completed by the duke of Lancaster and the count of Eu.<sup>2</sup>

In the thirty-first year of his reign king Edward granted safe-conduct to William de Leith, to wait on queen Isabella at her castle of Rising, he coming from Scotland, probably with news from her daughter, queen

<sup>1</sup> New Fœdera, vol. ii. p. 835.

<sup>2</sup> Caley's Fœdera. Philip's letters are in French, Edward's replies are in Latin.

Joanna, who was then very sick. This person was physician to the queen of Scotland.<sup>1</sup>

The next year Isabella died at Castle Rising, August 22d, 1358, aged sixty-three. She chose the church of the Grey Friars, where the mangled remains of her paramour Mortimer had been buried, eight-and-twenty-years previously, for the place of her interment; and, carrying her characteristic hypocrisy even to the grave, she was buried with the heart of her murdered husband on her breast. King Edward gave his mother a pompous funeral, and issued a precept to the sheriffs of London and Middlesex, November 20th, to cleanse the streets from dirt and all impurities, and to gravel Bishopsgate-street and Aldgate, against the coming of the body of his dearest mother, queen Isabella; and directs the officers of his exchequer to disburse 9*l.* for that purpose. Isabella was interred in the choir of the Grey Friars, within Newgate, and had a fine alabaster tomb erected to her memory. She had given 62*l.* towards the building of this church. It was usual for persons buried in the Grey Friars to be wrapped in the garment of the order,<sup>2</sup> as a security against the attacks of the foul fiend. Queen Isabella was buried in that garment, and few stood more in need of such protection.

According to Bloomfield, local tradition asserts that queen Isabella lies buried in Castle Rising church, and that all the procession to the Grey Friars in London was but an empty pageant. In confirmation of this assertion, they point out a simple grey stone, with this inscription deeply cut—

“ISABELLA REGINA.”

Antiquaries, however, are of opinion that this stone covers the grave of one of the officers, or ladies, who died in her service at Castle Rising; but it is also possible that she might have bequeathed her heart to her parish church, and that this inscription may denote the spot where it was interred.

An effigy of Isabella is to be seen, in the most exquisite preservation, among the figures which adorn the tomb of her son, John of Eltham, at Westminster Abbey. It is the third from the right hand, when the examiner stands with his back to St. Edward's chapel. The workmanship of this, and the other statues of John of Eltham's kindred, is of

<sup>1</sup> Bloomfield's Norfolk. Public Acts. Walsingham. Bloomfield. Stow. London. Pennant. The *Fœdera* implies, “that William de Leith was employed to request queen Isabella to act as mediatrix between David and Edward, regarding the ransom of David, king of Scotland.”

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps Isabella, in the decline of life, had been admitted into the third order of St. Francis, instituted, about twenty years before her death, for lay-penitents who were not bound by conventual vows. That she made some pretence to piety may be inferred from the following list of her relics, for which Edward III. gave a receipt “to his beloved chaplain Edmund de Rammersby on behalf of his mother, the first year of her imprisonment:—Two crystal vases, containing minute bones, relics of the holy Innocents; one silver flask, containing relics of St. Sylvester; part of the side of St. Lawrence enclosed in silver; and a joint of John the Baptist's little finger.”—*Caley's Fœdera*, p. 825.

the most delicate kind; the easiness of the attitudes, united with minute attention to details, denote an artist of superior genius. The effigies are all cast in bronze, and the row opposite to St. Edward's chapel are so well secured from the mischievous assaults of abbey depredators, by the *grille* of thick iron, which parts the tomb from the passage, that they are in the same state as when they came from the hands of the artist. First stands the mother of Isabella, the queen of France and Navarre: she exactly resembles her portrait engraved in Montfaucon. Then stands the effigy of Isabella's father, Philip le Bel. Next is given Isabella herself; her head is remarkably broad and low, and she has considerable breadth over the cheek-bones; she is very like her mother, but her features are pretty, with a laughing expression; the effigy is identified as hers by the garb of royal widowhood. She wears a crown on the top of her hood, her veil hangs on each side of her face, the widow's barb appears half covering her chin, and a sceptre is in her hand. Such was certainly her dress at Castle Rising, at the death of her son, prince John, in 1334, and such must have been her costume during the remainder of her life; since widows in those times wore the dress of mourning all their lives, unless they found second husbands. The effigy of her murdered lord, Edward II., stands next hers; it is extremely like that on his tomb at Gloucester.

Isabella's virtuous daughter, Joanna queen of Scotland, the faithful and devoted consort of the unfortunate David Bruce, survived her mother only a few days, and was interred in the church of the Grey Friars within Newgate.<sup>1</sup> Some authors assert that, on the same day, London witnessed the solemn pageant of the entrance of the funeral procession of the two queens,—one from the eastern, and the other from the northern road,—and that, entering the church by opposite doors, the royal biers met at the high altar. After a separation of thirty years, the evil mother and the holy daughter were united in the same burial rite.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Speed. Stow's Annals. On the site of Christ Church School.

<sup>2</sup> Stow's Annals. The Chronicles and the *Fædera* are at variance on this head. Simon archbishop of Canterbury names queen Joanna among the *serene ladies* who graced the wedding of the Black Prince, in 1360.—*Fædera*, vol. vii.

# PHILIPPA OF HAINAULT,

## QUEEN OF EDWARD III.

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### CHAPTER I.

Previous attachment of Edward III. and Philippa—His sojourn at her father's court—Her blooming beauty—Demanded in marriage—Philippa arrives in London—Reception—Philippa travels to York—Married there—Her dower—Coronation—Claim on her shoes, bed, and silver basins—Birth of her eldest son—Queen nourishes him—Her portraits—Tournament—Dangerous accident—King's fury—Queen's intercession—Philippa's woollen manufacturers—Scotch war—Queen besieged in Bamborough castle—Birth of the princess royal—Of the princess Joanna—Of William of Hatfield—Death of this prince—Death of the queen's father—Poverty of the king—Pawns queen's crown—Philippa's residence in Flanders—Birth of prince Lionel—Queen's visit to Norwich—King's naval victory—Queen's fourth son—King Edward's challenge—Pacification by the queen's mother—Extreme poverty of Edward and Philippa—Their secret departure from Ghent—Embark with their infant—Land at the Tower—King's anger—Countess of Salisbury—Order of the Garter—Philippa assists at the first chapter—Residence at Woodstock.

THE happy union of the illustrious Philippa with her thrice renowned lord had been previously cemented by mutual preference, manifested in the first sweet springtime of existence, when prince Edward took refuge with his mother, queen Isabella, at the court of Hainault.

"Count William of Hainault had, at that time, four daughters," says Froissart; "these were Margaret, Philippa, Joanna, and Isabel. The young prince, during his mother's residence in Hainault, paid more court and attention to Philippa than to any of the others; the young lady also conversed with him more frequently, and sought his company oftener, than any of her sisters." This was in 1326, when prince Edward was in his fifteenth year, and the lady Philippa a few months younger. She possessed some Flemish beauty, being tall in stature, and adorned with the brilliant complexion for which the women of that country are celebrated.

A poet of her time has commemorated "her roseate hue and beauty bright;" and we can well imagine, though Philippa's matron charms became a little too exuberant in after life, that, as a sweet-tempered Flemish girl in her fifteenth year, her early bloom was very lovely.

The youthful lovers, after residing together in the palace of the count of Hainault, at Valenciennes, for about a fortnight, were separated. Edward embarked, with his mother and John of Hainault, on the dangerous expedition of invading his unfortunate father's kingdom, while his beloved

was left in a state of uncertainty, whether the exigencies of the state and the caprice of relatives would ultimately permit to be joined the hands of those whose hearts had already elected each other.

Although a decided affection subsisted between young Edward and Philippa, it was not considered in accordance with the royal etiquette of that era, for the heir of England to acknowledge that he had disposed of his heart without the consent of his parliament and council. Queen Isabella undertook the arrangement of this affair, and soon led the public authorities to the decision, that a daughter of the count of Hainault would be the most desirable alliance for her son; but, even as late as the fifth of August, 1327, the particular daughter of that family was not pointed out in the document requesting the dispensation of the pope; the words are, "to marry a *daughter* of that nobleman, William count of Hainault, Holland, and Zealand, and lord of Friesland;" but the name of Philippa is not once mentioned throughout the letter. Thus the lovers remained seven months after the coronation of Edward in a state of suspense.<sup>1</sup>

The council, at last, gravely decided that Adam Orleton,<sup>2</sup> the notorious bishop of Hereford, should visit the court of Hainault, and choose, among the daughters of the count, the young lady who seemed most worthy to be the queen of England. As the choice of the bishop and king fell on Philippa, the young king had certainly informed Adam Orleton, in confidence, which princess among the fair sisterhood was the elected lady of his heart. The proceedings of the bishop are thus narrated by our last rhyming chronicler, Harding:—<sup>3</sup>

He sent forth then to Hainault, for a wife,  
A bishop and other lords temporal.  
Among them-*selves* our lords, for high prudence,  
Of the bishop asked counsel and sentence,  
"Which daughter of the five should be our queen?"  
Who counsell'd thus with sad avisement,  
"We will have her with fairest form, I wene."  
To which they all accorded with one mind,  
And chose Philippe that was full feminine,  
As the wise bishop did determine;  
But then among them-*selves* they laughed aye;  
Those lords then said, their bishop judged full sooth  
The beauty of a lady.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The name of Philippa is not mentioned till the last instrument from Avignon was executed, dated Sept. 3, 1327.—*Fœdera*, vol. iv.

<sup>2</sup> Hist. Bishops of Winchester, vol. i.

<sup>3</sup> Harding was a Lincolnshire man, a chronicler, and an antiquary, brought up in the family of the earl of Northumberland, so famous in the deposition of Richard II. In his youth he acted as secretary to his lord, and was present at the battle of Shrewsbury. He is, therefore, nearly a contemporary, and, as such, his authority is great. His age must have been extreme, as he lived through the whole of the reigns of the house of Lancaster; was pensioned by Henry VI. in 20*l.* per annum, and finally presented his complete history to Edward IV.: he must then have been more than ninety. He mentions five daughters of Hainault; the eldest, Sybella, who had been contracted to Edward III. in his infancy, was dead at this time.

<sup>4</sup> This passage, among many others, will prove that personal beauty was con-

“Shortly after the young king Edward completed his sixteenth year,” says Froissart, “his council sent a bishop, two knight bannerets, and two able clerks, to Sir John of Hainault, to beg of him to assist the young king of England in his suit to one of his nieces, since the young king would love her more dearly than any other lady, on his account Sir John feasted and paid many honours to these messengers. He took them to Valenciennes, where his brother the count of Hainault gave them such sumptuous entertainment as would be tiresome to relate. He most willingly complied with their requests, if the pope and holy church had no objection. Two of the knights and some able clerks were despatched to Avignon; for without the pope’s dispensation it could not be done, on account of their near relationship, for their two mothers were cousins-german. As soon as they came to Avignon, the pope and college consented most benignantly. On their return to Valenciennes immediate preparations were made for the dress and equipage of a lady, who was considered worthy to be the queen of England.”

The king, then at Nottingham, empowered the bishop of Lichfield and Coventry,<sup>1</sup> on the 8th of October, 1327, to conclude his marriage with the noble damsel, Philippa of Hainault. He likewise charges “his beloved Bartholomew de Burghersh, constable of Dover, to receive and welcome into his kingdom that noble person, William count of Hainault, with the illustrious damsel Philippa, his daughter, and the familiars of the said count and damsel; and he charges all and singular his nobility and people of the counties through which the count, damsel, and familiars may pass, to do them honour and give them needful aid.”<sup>2</sup> It was necessary for the lady Philippa and her escort to travel across England to meet the royal bridegroom, who was then performing his warlike noviciate on the Scottish border, under the auspices of his mother and Mortimer, against the great Robert Bruce.

Philippa was married at Valenciennes by procuration, soon after the date of this instrument. She embarked for England at Wisan, landed at Dover with all her suite, and arrived in London, December 23, 1327, with a retinue and display of magnificence in accordance with the great wealth of her country. She was escorted by her uncle, John of Hainault, and not by her father, as was expected. A solemn procession of the clergy introduced her into the city, and she was presented by the lord mayor and aldermen of London with a service of plate worth 300*l.*, as a marriage gift—a benefaction prompted most likely by the gratitude of the citizens

sidered by our ancestors as a most desirable qualification in a queen-consort. For this reason, these biographies are compelled by truth to dwell on the personal advantages possessed by our queens. The queens of England, down to Katherine of Arragon, seem, with few exceptions, to have been the finest women of their time.

<sup>1</sup> *Fœdera*, vol. iv. Adam Orleton, who began the negotiation, had not the honour of finishing the treaty. He had at this time fallen into disgrace with Isabella and Mortimer, for accepting the rich bishopric of Winchester without the consent of the crown, and pertinaciously refusing to pay a bribe high enough to satisfy the rapacity of the queen-mother. The astute priest considered she was too much in his power to need such consideration. (See preceding biography.)

<sup>2</sup> Dated at Clipstowe. *Fœdera*, vol. iv.

for a treaty of commerce, established between England and the Low Countries in the preceding summer, when these nuptials were first publicly agitated. The king was still with his army in the north, York being his head-quarters; and though London was in an uproarious state of rejoicing at her arrival, the royal bride left it immediately to meet her lord. But there were feastings and sumptuous entertainments in London for three weeks after her landing.

The hands of Edward and Philippa were united at York, January 24, 1328. The magnificence of the espousals was heightened by the grand entry of a hundred of the principal nobility of Scotland, who had arrived in order to conclude a lasting peace with England, cemented by the marriage of the king's little sister Joanna. The parliament and royal council were likewise convened at York, and the flower of the English nobility, then in arms, were assembled round the young king and his bride.

The royal pair kept Easter at York, and after the final peace with Scotland they returned southward from Lincoln to Northampton, and finally settled, in June, at the beautiful summer palace of Woodstock, which seems the principal abiding-place of Philippa, while her young husband was yet under the tutelage of Mortimer and the queen-mother.

A dead silence is kept in all the public documents regarding the amount of Philippa's portion, for reasons good, since the queen-mother had already spent it. As for the usual dower of the queens of England, the whole of its lands were possessed by the queen-mother; but by a deed executed at Northampton,<sup>1</sup> May 5th, "the king," says the venerable father, Roger, bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, "had promised that 15,000*l.* per annum of lands should be settled on her."

Isabella provided so well for herself and her daughter-in-law, that she left her son, the sovereign of England, nearly penniless.

After assisting at the marriage of his niece, sir John of Hainault returned to his native country, laden with jewels and rich presents. Few of the Hainaulters who had escorted her to England stayed with queen Philippa; but among those who remained was a youth, named sir Wantelet de Mauny,<sup>2</sup> whose office was to carve for her.

The coronation of the young queen did not take place till more than two years after her marriage. The king, from his palace at Eltham, issued a summons, dated the 28th of February, 1330, "for his beloved and faithful Bartholomew de Burghersh to appear with his barons of the Cinque Ports, to do their customary duties at the coronation of his dearest queen, Philippa, which takes place, if God be propitious, the Sunday next to the feast of St. Peter, in the cathedral of Westminster." It took place on that day with no particular splendour, for the rapacity of Isabella and Mortimer had absorbed all the funds provided to support the dignity of the crown. But the period of their sway drew near its close. The young lion of England had already manifested signs of disdain, at the ignoble restraint, in which he was held.

<sup>1</sup> *Fœdera*, vol. iv.

<sup>2</sup> *Froissart*. This attendant of queen Philippa is sir Walter Mauny, so celebrated as one of the first knights of the garter.

Parliament was summoned that spring at Woodstock; whither Philippa and her royal lord had retired after the coronation. A singular document<sup>1</sup> is dated from thence, the succeeding April, in which the king informs his treasurer, "that his faithful and beloved Robert de Vere, being earl of Oxford, was hereditary chamberlain to the queens of England; at all coronations the ancestors of the earl had officiated in the same capacity; and that in consequence he claimed the bed in which the queen had slept, her shoes, and three silver basins—one, in which she washed her head,<sup>2</sup> and two others in which she washed her hands. And the king desires that the earl may freely receive the basins and the shoes; but as for the bed, the treasurer is to pay the earl chamberlain a hundred marks as a compensation for his claim thereon."

While the young king was yet under the dominion of his unworthy mother, his consort, Philippa, gave birth to her first-born, afterwards the celebrated hero Edward, surnamed the Black Prince. He first saw the light at the palace of Woodstock, June 15, 1330. The great beauty of this infant, his size, and the firm texture of his limbs, filled every one with admiration who saw him. Like that renowned queen-regent of France, Blanche of Castille, mother of St. Louis, Philippa chose to nourish her babe at her own bosom. It is well known, that the portraits of the lovely young Philippa and her princely boy formed the favourite models, for the Virgin and Child, at that era.

In order to celebrate the birth of the heir of England, a grand tournament was proclaimed at London. Philippa and all the female nobility were invited to be present. Thirteen knights were engaged on each side, and the tournament was held in Cheapside, between Wood-street and Queen-street; the highway was covered with sand to prevent the horses' feet from slipping, and a grand temporary tower was erected, made of boarding, filled with seats for the accommodation of the queen and her ladies. But scarcely had this fair company entered the tower, when the scaffolding suddenly gave way, and all present fell to the ground with the queen. Though no one was injured, all were terribly frightened, and great confusion ensued. When the young king saw the peril of his wife, he flew into a tempest of rage, and vowed that the careless carpenters, who had constructed the building, should instantly be put to death. Whether he would thus far have stretched the prerogative of an English sovereign can never be known, for his angelic partner, scarcely recovered from the terror of her fall, threw herself on her knees before the incensed king, and so effectually pleaded for the pardon of the poor men, that Edward became pacified, and forgave them.

In the decline of the year 1330, Edward III. shook off the restraints imposed upon him by his unworthy mother and her ferocious paramour. He executed justice on the great criminal Mortimer, in the summary and hasty way, in which he was always inclined to act, when under the impulse of passion, and at a distance from his queen. No one can wonder that he was impatient to destroy the murderer of his father and of

<sup>1</sup> *Fœdera*, vol. iv. p. 426.

<sup>2</sup> *Face* would be more likely, but the actual word is *capitis*.



his uncle. Still this eagerness to execute sudden vengeance under the influence of rage, whether justly or unjustly excited, is a trait in the character of this mighty sovereign which appears in his youth; and which it is necessary to point out in order to develop the beautiful and nearly perfect character of his queen.

No sooner were the reins of government in the hands of the young king, than he vigorously exerted himself for the reformation of the abuses, for which the administration of Mortimer was infamous; many excellent laws were made, and others revived, to the great satisfaction of the English people. But, above all things, the king had the wisdom to provide a profitable occupation for the active energies of his people.

"Blessed be the memory of king Edward III. and Philippa of Hainault his queen, who first invented clothes;" says a monastic chronicler. Start not, gentle reader; the English wore clothes before the time of this excellent queen; the grateful monk, by this invocation, merely means to imply, that by her advice, the English first manufactured *cloth*.<sup>1</sup>

Philippa, young as she was, well remembered the sources of prosperity which enriched her own country. She established a manufacturing colony at Norwich, in the year 1335; but the first steps towards this good work were commenced so early as the 3d of July, 1331, within a few months of the assumption of power, by the youthful king. A letter so dated, from Lincoln, is addressed to John Kempe of Flanders, cloth-weaver in wool, in which he is informed, "that if he will come to England with the servants and apprentices of his mystery, and with his goods and chattels, and with any dyers and fullers who may be inclined willingly to accompany him beyond seas, and exercise their mysteries in the kingdom of England, they shall have letters of protection and assistance in their settlement."<sup>2</sup>

Philippa occasionally visited Kempe, and the rest of her colony in Norwich. Nor did she disdain to blend all the magnificence of chivalry with her patronage of the productive arts. Like a beneficent queen of the hive, she cherished and protected the working bees. At a period of her life, which, in common characters, is considered girlhood, she had enriched one of the cities of her realm by her statistical wisdom. There was wisdom likewise in the grand tournaments she held at Norwich, which might be considered as exhibitions showing the citizens

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<sup>1</sup> A more coherent notice of this great benefit to England is given by Fuller, who defines the difference between a pastoral and a manufacturing land in his usual impressive though quaint style. "The king, having married Philippa, the daughter of the earl of Hainault, began now to grow sensible of the great gain the Netherlands gat by our English wool, in memory whereof the duke of Burgundy, a century after, instituted the order of the Golden Fleece, wherein indeed the fleece was ours, but the gold theirs, so vast was their emolument by the trade of clothing. Our king therefore resolved, if possible, to reduce the trade to his own countrymen, who as yet were ignorant, as knowing no more what to do with their wool than the sheep that bore it."

<sup>2</sup> *Fædera*. Probably the name of John Kempe is derived from comb, (that instrument being used in his employment,) and means John of the Comb, as the old English of the verb "to comb" is *to kempe*. Kempe was the patriarch of the Norwich woollen manufactures.

how well, in time of need, they could be protected by a gallant nobility. These festivals displayed the defensive class, and the productive class, in admirable union and beneficial intercourse; while the example of the queen promoted mutual respect between them. Edward III. did not often take part in these visits to Norwich, which were generally paid by the queen while her husband spent some days with his guilty and miserable mother, at Castle Rising in Norfolk; <sup>1</sup> a strong proof that he did not consider Isabella a fit companion for his Philippa.

It is likely that the establishment of the Flemish artists in England had some connexion with the visit that Jeanne of Valois, countess of Hainault, paid to her royal daughter, in the autumn of 1331. The mother of Philippa was a wise and good woman, who loved peace and promoted the peaceful arts. During her sojourn in England she further strengthened the beneficial alliance between England and the Low Countries, by negotiating a marriage between the king's sister, Eleanor, and the duke of Gueldres, which was soon after celebrated.

Edward III. commenced a furious war on Scotland in 1333. His faithful queen followed his campaign, but while the king laid siege to Berwick, Philippa was in some danger at Bamborough Castle, where she resided that summer; for Douglas, the valiant guardian of his young king, turned the tables on the English invader, and made a forced march, to lay fierce siege to Bamborough, <sup>2</sup> hoping that Edward, alarmed at the danger of his queen, would relinquish Berwick, and fly to her assistance, but Edward knew too well the strength of "king Ina's castle broad and high," and the firm mind of his Philippa, to swerve from his designs on Berwick.

Yet the temper of Edward was certainly aggravated into ferociousness by the attempt to capture his queen; and he was led by sudden passion into the cruel murder of the two young Seaton. These unfortunate youths were the sons of the governor of Berwick, either given by him as hostages to Edward III., for the performance of certain terms of surrender, or, what was still worse, were prisoners put to death, because their father would not surrender his trust. Either way, the act was atrocious; perhaps it would have been prevented if the just and gracious Philippa had been by the side of her incensed lord. But Philippa was closely besieged in Bamborough: and her danger exasperated her husband into an act, really worse than any performed by his stern grand-sire, Edward I. The king knew that the Douglas was no trifle in any work he took in hand; he therefore resolved, by a desperate blow, to take Berwick, and march to relieve his queen from the attacks of the Scottish regent. He certainly gained Berwick from the stunned and paralysed father; but by the murder of the hapless youths, he for ever stained his chivalric name.

Douglas and Edward joined battle, not far from Berwick, soon after, and the Scots were overpowered at the disastrous battle of Halidon Hill.

<sup>1</sup> See the preceding biography.

<sup>2</sup> Guthrie, folio Hist.

Edward, with his queen, afterwards triumphantly entered Berwick, which has ever since remained annexed to the English crown.<sup>1</sup>

Edward and Philippa were in England during the winter of 1334. At the palace of Woodstock, on February the 5th, the queen brought into the world Elizabeth,<sup>2</sup> (likewise called Isabella,) the princess royal. The queen undertook another campaign in the succeeding spring. That year her father sent king Edward a present of a rich helmet, made of gold and set with precious stones; with a remonstrance against wasting his strength in Scotland, where there was no plunder to be got, when the same expense would prosecute his claims on France. The queen this winter became the mother of a second princess, named Joanna. Philippa followed her lord to a third northern campaign. Her second son, William of Hatfield, was born in a village in Yorkshire, in the winter of 1336: this infant lived but a few weeks.<sup>3</sup>

In the absence of Edward, the Scotch war was prosecuted by his only brother, John earl of Cornwall, with great cruelty; this young prince died at Perth, October the 5th, of a wound which he got in his ferocious attack on Lesmahago.<sup>4</sup>

While Philippa resided in the north of England, a circumstance occurred which is an amusing instance of monastic etiquette. King Edward had returned from Scotland, and advanced as far as Durham, where he established his lodging in St. Cuthbert's Priory, near the castle. The queen travelled from York to meet and welcome him. She supped in the priory, and, thinking it was no offence, retired to pass the night in

<sup>1</sup> Edward Balliol invaded Scotland with the English army, having first sent a civil message to young king David, offering to secure to him the family estates of the Bruce, if he would surrender to him his kingdom and his wife, the young sister of king Edward. To this modest request the Scotch council (for the gallant Douglas lost his life at Halidon) replied by sending their young king and queen for safety to France, and preparing to defend their kingdom to the last gasp. Some authors declare that, after this conquest, Edward kept his Christmas at Roxburgh, with his queen, but his government acts are dated in January at Wallingford.—*Guthrie*.

<sup>2</sup> The names of Isabella and Elizabeth were synonymous in the middle ages, to the confusion of history and genealogy.

<sup>3</sup> The accounts of the funeral expenses of this infant, who was buried in York Cathedral, are curious features in the Wardrobe Book of his father:—1336. "Paid for different masses about the body of lord William, son to the king, deceased; likewise for the purchase of three hundred and ninety-three pounds of wax, burnt round the prince's corpse at Hatfield, Pomfret, and York, where he was buried; and for three cloths of gold diapered, to be placed over the said corpse and tomb, also for a hood for the face, and for webs, linen, and hearses, March 3d, ninth year of Edward III., 42*l.* 11*s.* 1*½d.*" "Paid for alms given by the king, for the soul of his son William, divided between Hatfield and York, masses at Pomfret and York, and for widows watching round the said corpse, and burial service, 99*l.* 3*s.* 5*½d.*"

<sup>4</sup> Boethius affirms that Edward III., enraged at the cruelty of his brother, for burning the church of Lesmahago with a thousand Scotch people therein, drew his sword and slew the young prince before the high altar of the church at Perth. So little is known of this prince, that the anecdote is worth recording; though the story of the deserved punishment of John is false, for Edward was not at Perth or in Scotland at that time.

her husband's apartment. Scarcely had she undressed when the affrighted monks came to the door, and pathetically remonstrated against the infringement of the rules of their order, intimating "that their holy patron St. Cuthbert, who during his life very sedulously eschewed the company of the fair sex, would be direfully offended if one of them slept beneath the roof of his convent, however high her rank might be." The pious Philippa, distressed at the idea of unwittingly offending St. Cuthbert, immediately rose from the bed in haste, fled in her night-dress to the castle, which was fortunately close by, and passed the night there by herself.<sup>1</sup>

The gout and other maladies put an end to the existence of count William of Hainault, soon after he had formed a league against France with King Edward; and with the wealthy father of his queen, Edward lost the liberal supplies, with which he carried on his warfare. The English people chose always to be at war; but they expected their monarchs to find the cost out of their private revenues and feudal dues, which were certainly not sufficient for the purpose. Edward was reduced to extreme poverty even in the commencement of his long war, and obliged to pawn his queen's crown at Cologne for 2500*l.*, in the year 1339. Soon after the English people submitted, not to a tax *on* wool, but a tax *of* wool, and subscribed 30,000 packs of that commodity,<sup>2</sup> which, being sent down the Rhine to Cologne, redeemed Philippa's best crown from thralldom. During the whole of this reign the crown jewels were seldom out of pawn, notwithstanding the wealth that the infant manufacture of cloth was already drawing to the coasts of England. The prosperity that the queen's colony of Flemish artists had brought to Norwich had been felt so early as 1336, when Philippa paid that city a visit, during her husband's progress to Castle Rising. She was received by the grateful citizens with all the honours due to a public benefactress.

As vicar of the empire, and head of the confederated league of Germany, Edward III. had his head-quarters, during several of the Flemish campaigns, at Antwerp and Ghent, where his queen kept her court. At Antwerp the third son of Philippa and Edward III. was born, November 29th, 1338. This prince was a true Fleming, being born in Flanders of a Flemish mother. In due time prince Lionel grew to be nearly seven feet in height, and, being athletic in proportion, was a champion of whom any country might be proud.

The queen returned, with this infant Hercules, to England in the autumn of 1339, and in the ensuing year king Edward paid a long visit to his unhappy mother in Norfolk, while queen Philippa went to Norwich to visit her woollen manufactories. She found a vast number of Norwich people, who, having been apprentices of Kempe and his followers, were establishing themselves in the profitable trades of weaving and dyeing. She was received with great joy, and favoured the citizens

<sup>1</sup> History of the Cathedral of Durham. The priory is at present the residence of the dean. <sup>2</sup> Fædera. Guthrie. Carte. Bloomfield's Norwich.

with her presence from February to Easter.<sup>1</sup> At the festivities of that season her royal lord held a grand tournament at Norwich, where he tilted in person.

In the spring of the same year, Philippa again sailed for the opposite coast, and established her court at Ghent. King Edward, in the meantime, cruised between England and Holland, where he had a fleet of upwards of 300 ships. Philippa gave birth to her fourth son at Ghent, on Midsummer-day 1340, at the very time that her warlike lord was fighting his great naval battle off Blakenburg. Next day, the king landed at Sluys, impatient to embrace his queen and her infant, and bring Philippa tidings of the greatest naval victory the English at that time had ever gained over France. Philippa's boy was John of Gaunt, afterwards so renowned as duke of Lancaster.

The interference of the mother of Philippa about this time occasioned a temporary cessation of hostilities between France and England.<sup>2</sup> This princess, just as the belligerents were about to engage before Tournay, went to her son-in-law, and then to her brother, king Philip, and, kneeling before them, implored them to make peace and stop the effusion of Christian blood.<sup>3</sup>

The pacification effected by the mother of queen Philippa for a while put a stop to this kindred warfare. It was indeed time, for both the mighty Edward and his faithful queen were literally in a state of bankruptcy. She had given up her crown, and all the jewels she possessed, which her royal lord had pawned to the Flemish merchants; but his wants were still so great, that to raise a further sum he likewise pawned

<sup>1</sup> Harding. Bloomfield.

<sup>2</sup> Froissart. Jeanne of Valois had retired into a convent after the death of her husband, the count of Hainault. This retreat was fired by her brother king Philip's troops in this war.

<sup>3</sup> The relationship between Edward's queen and the competitor for the throne of France was near; she was both his niece and name-child, and the veneration and love which her mother bore to king Philip were excessive. The motives that prompted the mother of Philippa to interfere in this extraordinary manner between armies ready to engage are perfectly consistent with the spirit of the middle ages. Her kinsman, king Roger of Sicily, a royal astrologer, had cast the nativities of Philip and Edward, and declared that he foresaw the discomfiture of the king of France if ever he fought against his rival. The letters of king Roger, alarming the sisterly fears of the countess Jeanne, induced her interference. At Tournay, Edward was endeavouring to provoke Philip into a personal combat. This excellent method of determining a succession-war, Philip declined, because the cartel was not directed to the king of France. Upon this, the whole English camp cried out on the cowardice of Philip, and a poet belonging to Edward, possessing more loyalty than Latin, wrote the following couplet—

Si valeas, venias, Valois! depelle timorem  
Non lateas; pateas; moveas. Ostende vigorem—

Which may be rendered,

Valois, be valiant! vile fear can't avail thee:  
Hide not, avoid not, let not vigour fail thee.

Edward, who had himself sent a rhyming declaration of war to Philip, swore "these were valiant verses," and caused them to be fastened to an arrow, and shot into Philip's encampment.

the person of his valiant kinsman the earl of Derby,<sup>1</sup> who actually gave himself up to personal restraint, while Edward stole away with his queen, and the child she nourished, to Zealand. Here he embarked with Philippa and the infant John of Gaunt, attended by a few servants. The ship was small, the weather stormy, and the royal passengers were in frequent danger of losing their lives: however, at midnight, December 2, 1340, they landed safely on Tower wharf. Here the king found that three nurses, and the rest of the royal children, constituted the sole garrison of his regal fortress of the Tower; the careless constable, Nicholas de la Beche, had decamped that evening to visit a lady-love in the city, and his warders and soldiers, following so good an example, had actually left the Tower to take care of itself.<sup>2</sup> The great Edward, who was not in the mildest of tempers, owing to the untoward state of his finances, took possession of the fortress of his capital in a towering rage. As his return was wholly unexpected, the consternation of constable de la Beche may be supposed, when he had concluded his city visit. It was well for the careless castellan, that the gentle Philippa was by the side of her incensed lord, at that juncture.

About this time, the heart of the mighty Edward swerved for a while from its fidelity to Philippa; and had not the royal hero been enamoured of a lady of exemplary virtue, the peace of the queen might have been for ever destroyed. Sir William Montacute had been rewarded for the good service he did the king, in the beginning of his reign, by the title of the earl of Salisbury. He had married the fair Catherine de Grason,<sup>3</sup> and received the castellanship of Wark Castle, whither he had taken his countess, who lived in retirement away from the court. In the meantime, Salisbury had been captured in the French war. His castle in the north, which was defended by his countess and his nephew, was besieged in the second Scottish war, by king David. When in great danger, young Montacute, by a bold personal adventure, carried the news of the distress of the countess to king Edward, who was encamped near Ber-

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<sup>1</sup> Carte. Guthrie. Caley's *Fœdera*. He remained in prison, being detained by Matthew Concanen and partners, merchants of the firm of the Leopard. Edward obtained supplies of his parliament next year, by declaring "that, if he was not enabled to redeem his honour and his cousin, the earl of Derby, he would go to Flanders, and surrender his royal person to his creditors." In answer to this appeal, the commons granted the fleece of the ninth sheep and the ninth lamb throughout England; coin seemed to be as scarce with the subjects as with their royal master and mistress.

<sup>2</sup> Froissart and several chroniclers.

<sup>3</sup> In Milles' Catalogue of Honour, the parentage of the countess of Salisbury is clearly traced. She was the daughter of William de Grason, a Burgundian knight of imperial lineage, a favourite of Edmund earl of Lancaster, who prevailed on Sibyl, heiress of Lord Tregose of Wiltshire, to marry his friend. Grason possessed nothing in the world but a handsome person, and a pedigree derived from the emperors of Constantinople. Catherine the Fair was the only child of this couple, and was endowed richly with her mother's wealth and her father's beauty. She bestowed both on the brave earl of Salisbury. Dugdale confirms this account, by quoting charters, in which he calls the countess Catherine de Grandison; of this name, Grason is an evident abbreviation.

wick. At the approach of Edward, the king of Scots raised the siege of Wark. The royal hero's interview with Catherine the Fair follows, in the words of Froissart:—

“The moment the countess heard of the king's approach, she ordered all the gates to be thrown open, and went to meet him most richly dressed; insomuch, that no one could look at her but with wonder and admiration at her noble deportment, great beauty, and affability of behaviour. When she came near king Edward, she made her obeisance to the ground, and gave him thanks for coming to her assistance, and then conducted him into the castle, to entertain and honour him, as she was very capable of doing.

“Every one was delighted with her; but the king could not take his eyes off from her, so that a *spark of fine love* struck upon his heart, which lasted a long time; for he did not believe, that the whole world produced any other lady, so worthy of being beloved. Thus they entered the castle, hand in hand. The countess led him first to the hall, and then to the best chamber, which was very richly furnished, as belonging to so fine a lady. King Edward kept his eyes so fixed upon the countess, that the gentle dame was quite abashed. After he had sufficiently examined his apartment, he retired to a window, and, leaning on it, fell into a profound reverie.

“The countess left him to order dinner to be made ready, and the tables set, and the hall ornamented and set out; likewise to welcome the knights and lords who accompanied the king. When she had given all the orders to her servants she thought needful, she returned with a cheerful countenance to king Edward, and said—

“‘Dear sir, what are you musing on? Such meditating is not proper for you, saving your grace. You ought rather to be in high spirits, having freed England from her enemy without loss of blood.’

“The king replied—

“‘Oh, dear lady, you must know that, since I have been in this castle, some thoughts have oppressed my mind that I was not before aware of; so that it behoves me to reflect. Being uncertain what may be the event, I cannot withdraw my attention.’

“‘Dear sir,’ answered the lady, ‘you ought to be of good cheer, and feast with your friends, to give them more pleasure, and leave off pondering; for God has been very bountiful to you in your undertakings, so that you are the most feared and renowned prince in Christendom. If the king of Scotland have vexed you by the mischiefs he hath done in your kingdom, you will speedily be able to make reprisal in his dominions. Therefore, come, if it please you, into the hall to your knights, for dinner will soon be served.’

“‘Oh, sweet lady,’ said king Edward, ‘there be other things which touch my heart, and lie heavy there, than what you talk of. For, in good truth, your beauteous mien, and the perfections of your face and behaviour, have wholly overcome me; and so deeply impress my heart, that my happiness wholly depends on meeting a return to my flame, which no denial from you can ever extinguish.’

“‘Oh, my dread lord,’ replied the countess, ‘do not amuse yourself

by laughing at me with trying to tempt me, for I cannot believe you are in earnest as to what you have just said. Is it likely that so noble and gallant a prince as you are would ever think of dishonouring either me or my husband, a valiant knight, who has served you so faithfully, and who now lies in a doleful prison on your account? Certainly, sir, this would not redound to your glory; nor would you be the better for it, if you could have your wayward will.'

"The virtuous lady then quitted the king, who was astonished at her words. She went into the hall to hasten dinner; afterwards she approached the king's chamber, attended by all the knights, and said to him,

"My lord king, your knights are all waiting for you, to wash their hands; for they, as well as yourself, have fasted too long.'

"King Edward left his apartment, and came to the hall, where, after he had washed his hands, he seated himself with his knights at the dinner, as did the lady also; but the king ate very little, and was the whole time pensive, casting his eyes, whenever he had the opportunity, on the countess. Such behaviour surprised his friends; for they were not accustomed to it, never having seen the like before in their king. They supposed it was his chagrin, at the departure of the Scots without a battle. The king remained at the castle the whole day, without knowing what to do with himself. Thus did he pass that day and a sleepless night, debating the matter with his own heart. At daybreak he rose, drew out his whole army, raised his camp, and made ready to follow the Scots. Upon taking leave of the countess, he said,

"My dear lady, God preserve you safe till I return, and I pray that you will think well of what I have said, and have the goodness to give me a different answer.'

"My gracious liege,' replied the countess, 'God of his infinite goodness preserve you, and drive from your noble heart such villanous thoughts; for I am, and ever shall be, ready to serve you, but only in what is consistent with my honour and with yours.'

"The king left her, quite astonished at her answers."

The love of king Edward wandered from queen Philippa, but for a short time; yet it was owing to the high principles of Catherine the Fair that he never swerved into the commission of evil.<sup>1</sup>

Queen Philippa, attired in the august robes of the new order of the Garter,<sup>2</sup> and attended by the ladies whom the gallantry of king Edward

<sup>1</sup> Though he appears still to have cherished a chivalric and heroic attachment for the countess, he soon showed that he had resigned what she very properly told him were "villanous thoughts." In proof of this fact, we find him, directly, making a two years' truce with the king of Scotland, one of the conditions of which was, "that king David should undertake a negotiation with his ally, the king of France, to exchange the earl of Moray, a prisoner of king Edward, for the earl of Salisbury," then in captivity in the dismal towers of the Chatelet.—*Froissart*, vol. i. p. 297.

<sup>2</sup> The story that the origin of this order, the Order of the Garter, took its rise from an accident that happened to the countess of Salisbury's dress, when dancing with king Edward III., must be untrue, since we have seen that the knights of the Blue Garter were confederated by Cœur de Lion long before the countess was born; therefore the Garter was a part of the order that had been



associated with his knights,<sup>1</sup> assisted her royal lord in holding the first chapter at Windsor, on St. George's day, 1344.

Philippa kept the birthday of her mighty lord with great festivity, at Woodstock, in the year 1345.<sup>2</sup> Here, in that sylvan palace, where she had spent the first years of her happy wedlock, did she find herself, in middle life, surrounded by a train of beautiful children, at the head of whom was Edward, prince of Wales, then on the eve of winning his vast meed of renown. Philippa's protégé, Chaucer, has in these elegant lines described one lovely feature of the favourite retreat of his royal mistress. He speaks of a maple,

". . . . . that is fair and green,  
Before the chamber windows of the queen  
At Woodstock."

devised many years previously to the era of king Edward. But that the countess of Salisbury was considered the heroine of the newly revived order, we have the express words of Froissart, as follows:—"You have all heard how passionately king Edward was smitten with the charms of that noble lady, Catherine countess of Salisbury. Out of affection to the said lady, and his desire to see her, he proclaimed a great feast in August, 1343. He commanded all his own lords and knights should be there without fail, and he expressly ordered the earl of Salisbury to bring the lady his wife, with as many young ladies as she could collect to attend her. The earl very cheerfully complied with the king's request, *for he thought no evil*; and his good lady dared not say, nay. She came, however, much against her will, for she guessed the reason which made the king so earnest for her attendance, but was afraid to discover it to her husband, intending, by her conduct and conversation, to make the king change his opinion." Froissart likewise adds, "that all the ladies and damsels who assisted at the first convocation of the Order of the Garter came superbly dressed, excepting the countess of Salisbury, who attended the festival dressed as plainly as possible: she did not wish the king to admire her, for she had no intention to obey him *in anything evil*, that might tend to the dishonour of her dear lord." Froissart's repetition of the expression "*anything evil*" is certainly in allusion to the mysterious motto of the order: indeed, the words of this motto are a mere variation of the same words in the French copies of Froissart.

<sup>1</sup> For several ages after the institution of the order of the Garter, every knight was accompanied by his lady, who was considered to belong to it. Sir Harris Nicolas, in his admirable work, on the Order of the Garter, fully proves that the ladies of the knights wore its badge. Several monuments still exist where it may be seen. Among others, the monumental statue of lady Harcourt, at Stanton Harcourt, displays the order of the Garter, with the celebrated motto on the left arm. She was born a Byron, and married Sir Robert Harcourt, elected knight in 1463. The effigy of the duchess of Suffolk, granddaughter to Chaucer, at Ewelme church, has the garter and motto buckled round the left arm, not as an armlet, but as a bracelet. The lady Tankerville, whose statue was lately at St. Katherine's by the Tower, had the same noble badge on her left arm. If the ladies companions of this noble order were restored according to the original institution of Edward III. and Philippa, how much splendour would such improvement add to the court of our fair queen! The Garter robes of queen Philippa are charged in the wardrobe accounts—Exchequer Rolls.

<sup>2</sup> Walsingham.

# PHILIPPA OF HAINAULT,

## QUEEN OF EDWARD III.

### CHAPTER II.

Queen Philippa left regent of England—Battle of Cressy—Queen's uncles—Siege of Calais—Scotch invasion—Queen defends England—Queen's exhortation to the army—Her victory of Neville's Cross—King David captured—Queen returns to London—Sails with many ladies to Calais—Burghers of Calais doomed to death by Edward—Philippa's intercession—Birth of princess Margaret—Edward and Philippa return to England—Betrothment of the queen's second daughter—Death of the princess—King Edward's letters—Queen's younger children—Philippa's tournament at Norwich—Queen's objections to the marriage of the Black Prince—Queen receives royal prisoners—Dialogue with Du Guesclin—Queen goes to France—Marriage of the Black Prince—Queen's reception of king John at Eltham—Alliances of royal family—Philippa's fatal illness—Death-bed—Tomb—Epitaph—Benefactions—Queen's College, Oxford—Pensions to her women—Alice Perrers—Queen's supposed confession—Virtues of queen Philippa.

In the first years of her marriage queen Philippa had been the constant attendant on her husband in his campaigns; the annals of the year 1346 display her character in a more brilliant light, as the sagacious ruler of his kingdom and the victorious leader of his army.

After the order of the Garter had been fully established, king Edward reminded his valiant knights and nobles, that, with him, they made a vow to assist distressed ladies; he then specified that the countess de Montfort particularly required the aid of his chivalry, for her lord was held in captivity by Philip de Valois, in the towers of the Louvre, while the countess was endeavouring to uphold the cause of her infant son, against the whole power of France. He signified his intention of giving his personal support to the heroic countess, and of leaving queen Philippa as regent of England during his absence.

On St. John the Baptist's day, the king took leave of queen Philippa, appointing the earl of Kent as her assistant in the government of England. The name of her young son, Lionel,<sup>1</sup> a child of eight years old, was associated with his mother in the regency. Philippa bade farewell to the darling of her heart, her son Edward, then in his sixteenth year. This young hero accompanied his royal sire, in order to win his spurs on the soil of France. The exploits of the heroic boy are well known; but it is not quite so well known that he was opposed, at the field of Cressy, to his mother's nearest connexions—to her uncle, Philip of Va-

<sup>1</sup> This child sat on the throne when parliaments were held.

lois, and even to sir John of Hainault, that favourite relative who had ever been treated by the queen as if he were her father. In the true spirit of a mercenary soldier, sir John had left the service of his niece's husband, in whose employment he had spent the best part of his life, merely because the king of France gave him a higher salary.

The first English military despatch ever written was addressed to queen Philippa and her council, by Michael Northborough, king Edward's warlike chaplain: it contains a most original and graphic detail of the battle of Cressy. It is dated, at the siege, before the town of Calais; for the battle of Cressy was but an interlude of that famous siege.

It was now Philippa's turn to do battle-royal, with a king. As a diversion in favour of France, David of Scotland advanced into England, a fortnight after the battle of Cressy, and burned the suburbs of York. At this juncture Philippa herself hastened to the relief of her northern subjects. Froissart has detailed with great spirit the brilliant conduct of the queen at this crisis:—

"The queen of England, who was very anxious to defend her kingdom, in order to show she was in earnest about it, came herself to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. She took up her residence there to wait for her forces. On the morrow the king of Scots, with full forty thousand men, advanced within three short miles of the town of Newcastle; he sent to inform the queen that, if her men were willing to come forth from the town, he would wait and give them battle. Philippa answered, 'that she accepted his offer, and that her barons would risk their lives for the realm of their lord the king.'"

The queen's army drew up in order for battle at Neville's Cross. Philippa advanced among them mounted on her white charger, and entreated her men to do their duty well, in defending the honour of their lord the king, and urged them, "for the love of God to fight manfully." They promised her "that they would acquit themselves loyally to the utmost of their power, and perhaps better than if the king had been there in person." The queen then took her leave of them, and recommended them "to the protection of God and St. George."

There is no vulgar personal bravado of the fighting woman, in the character of Philippa. Her courage was wholly moral courage, and her feminine feelings of mercy and tenderness led her, when she had done all that a great queen could do, by encouraging her army, to withdraw from the work of carnage, and pray for her invaded kingdom while the battle joined.

The English archers gained the battle, which was fought on the lands of lord Neville.<sup>1</sup> King David was taken prisoner, on his homeward retreat, but not without making the most gallant resistance.

<sup>1</sup> The Saturday before Michaelmas-day, 1346, fifteen thousand Scots were slain. There is reason to suppose that, where Froissart names Newcastle, the word should be Durham, since the English army certainly mustered in the Bishop's Park at Auckland, and Neville's Cross itself is distant but one mile west of Durham.

"When the queen of England (who had tarried in Newcastle while the battle was fought) heard that her army had won the victory, she mounted, on her white palfrey, and went to the battle-field. She was informed on the way that the king of Scots was the prisoner of a squire named John Copeland, who had rode off with him, no one knew whither.<sup>1</sup> The queen ordered him to be sought out, and told 'that he had done what was not agreeable to her, in carrying off her prisoner without leave.' All the rest of the day the queen and her army remained on the battle-field they had won, and then returned to Newcastle for the night."

Next day Philippa wrote with her own hand to John Copeland, commanding him to surrender the king of Scots to her. John answered in a manner most contumacious to the female majesty, then swaying the sceptre of England with so much ability and glory. He replied to Philippa, "that he would not give up his royal prisoner to woman or child,<sup>2</sup> but only to his own lord king Edward, for to him he had sworn allegiance, and not to any woman." There spoke the haughty spirit of feudality, which disdained to obey a female regent, although then encamped on a victorious field.

The queen was greatly troubled at the obstinacy of this northern squire, and scarcely knew how to depend on the assurance he added, bidding her knight tell the queen, "she might depend on his taking good care of king David." In this dilemma, Philippa wrote letters to the king her husband, which she sent off directly to Calais. In these letters she informed him of the state of his kingdom.

The king then ordered John Copeland to come to him at Calais, who, having placed his prisoner in a strong castle in Northumberland, set out, and landed near Calais. When the king of England saw the squire, he took him by the hand, saying, "Ha! welcome, my squire, who by thy valour hast captured mine adversary, the king of Scots!"

John Copeland fell on one knee, and replied, "If God, out of his great kindness, has given me the king of Scotland, and permitted me to conquer him in arms, no one ought to be jealous of it, for God can, if he pleases, send his grace to a poor squire, as well as to a great lord. Sire, do not take it amiss if I did not surrender king David, to the orders of my lady queen, for I hold my lands of *you* and not of *her*, and my oath is to you, and not to her, unless, indeed, through choice."

King Edward answered, "John, the loyal service you have done us, and our esteem for your valour, is so great, that it may well serve you as an excuse, and shame fall on all those who bear you any ill-will. You will now return home, and take your prisoner, the king of Scotland, and convey him to my wife; and, by way of remuneration, I assign

<sup>1</sup> Knighton says he lodged him in the strong fortress of Bamborough. King David was determined to provoke Copeland to kill him, knowing the miseries his captivity would cause his country. His resistance was terrific; he dashed his gauntlet on Copeland's mouth, when called on to surrender, and knocked out several of his teeth. Copeland kept his temper, and succeeded in capturing him alive.

<sup>2</sup> Philippa was associated with the young prince, Lionel, in the regency.

lands as near your house as you can choose them, to the amount of 500*l.* a year, for you and your heirs."<sup>1</sup> John Copeland left Calais the third day after his arrival, and returned to England. When he was come home he assembled his friends and neighbours, and, in company with them, took the king of Scots and carried him to York, where he presented him, in the name of king Edward, to queen Philippa, and made such excuses that she was satisfied.

And great magnanimity Philippa displayed in being content with the happy result. How many women would have borne an unextinguishable hatred to John Copeland, for a far less offence than refusing obedience to a delegated sceptre!

Philippa lodged David in the Tower of London; he was conducted by her orders, in grand procession, through the streets, mounted on a tall black war-horse, that every one might recognise his person, in case of escape. Next day she sailed for Calais, and landed three days before All Saints.<sup>2</sup> The arrival of Philippa occasioned a stir of gladness in the besieging camp. Her royal lord held a grand court to welcome his victorious queen, and made a magnificent fête for her ladies. Philippa brought with her the flower of the female nobility of England, many ladies being anxious to accompany her to Calais, in order to see fathers, husbands, and brothers, all engaged in this famous siege.

While queen Philippa was encamped with her royal lord before Calais, the young count of Flanders, who had been kept by Edward in his army as a sort of captive, ran away to the king of France, to avoid his marriage engagements with the princess-royal—a circumstance which caused great grief and indignation to the queen and her family. But the conduct of the young lord of Flanders can scarcely excite wonder; for Edward III., certainly forgetting *son métier du roi*, was in a strong league with the count's rebellious subject, the brewer von Artavelde, who, under pretence of reform, had overturned the government of Flanders,<sup>3</sup> and delivered up its count to the king of England, the states of Flanders having betrothed him to the eldest daughter of Edward, without consulting his inclinations.<sup>4</sup>

The young count at last requested an interview with his betrothed. What passed is not known, but the young couple seemed on the most friendly terms with each other; and the queen, supposing the charms of the young Isabella had captivated the unwilling heart of count Louis, with her usual generosity requested he might be left unguarded, fancying he would remain Isabella's willing prisoner. But the escape of the count followed soon after, to the great exasperation of Edward III. As Isabella afterwards made a love-match, the whole scheme had probably been concerted between her and her betrothed; for life, in the fourteenth century, was an acted romance.

<sup>1</sup> Copeland was likewise made a knight banneret: he was afterwards sheriff of Northumberland and warden of Berwick.

<sup>2</sup> October 29th.

<sup>3</sup> Queen Philippa, when in Flanders, stood godmother to the son of Edward, democratic ally, afterwards the famous Philip von Artavelde. "To this instant," says the chronicler, "she gave at the font her own name of Philip."

<sup>4</sup> Froissart.

Meantime, the brave defenders of Calais were so much reduced by famine as to be forced to capitulate. At first Edward resolved to put them all to the sword. By the persuasions of sir Walter Mauny, he somewhat relaxed from his bloody intentions. "He bade sir Walter," says Froissart, "return to Calais with the following terms:—'Tell the governor of Calais that the garrison and inhabitants shall be pardoned, excepting six of the principal citizens, who must surrender themselves to death, with ropes round their necks, bareheaded, and barefooted, bringing the keys of the town and castle in their hands.' Sir Walter returned to the brave governor of Calais, John de Vienne, who was waiting for him on the battlements, and told him all he had been able to gain from the king. The lord of Vienne went to the market-place, and caused the bell to be rung, upon which all the inhabitants assembled in the town-hall. He then related to them what he had said, and the answers he had received, and that he could not obtain better conditions. Then they broke into lamentations of grief and despair, so that the hardest heart would have had compassion on them; and their valiant governor, lord de Vienne, wept bitterly. After a short pause, the most wealthy citizen of Calais, by name Eustace St. Pierre, rose up and said, 'Gentlemen, both high and low, it would be pity to suffer so many of our countrymen to die through famine; it would be highly meritorious in the eyes of our Saviour if such misery could be prevented. If I die to serve my dear townsmen, I trust I shall find grace before the tribunal of God. I name myself first of the six.'

"When Eustace had done speaking, his fellow-citizens all rose up and almost adored him, casting themselves on their knees, with tears and groans. Then another citizen rose up, and said he would be the second to Eustace; his name was John Daire: after him, James Wisant, who was very rich in money and lands, and kinsman to Eustace and John; his example was followed by Peter Wisant, his brother; two others<sup>1</sup> then offered themselves, which completed the number demanded by king Edward. The governor mounted a small horse, for it was with difficulty he could walk, and conducted them through the gate to the barriers; he said to sir Walter, who was there waiting for him—

"**'I deliver up to you, as governor of Calais, these six citizens, and swear to you they were, and are at this day, the most wealthy and respectable inhabitants of the town. I beg of you, gentle sir, that of your goodness you would beseech the king that they may not be put to death.'** 'I cannot answer what the king will do with them,' replied sir Walter; 'but you may depend upon this, that I will do all I can to save them.' The barriers were then opened, and the six citizens were conducted to the pavilion of king Edward. When sir Walter Mauny had presented these six citizens to the king, they fell upon their knees, and, with uplifted hands, said—

"**'Most gallant king, see before you six citizens of Calais, who have been capital merchants, and who bring you the keys of the town and**

<sup>1</sup> English tradition declares that one of these was the young son of Eustace St Pierre.

castle. We surrender ourselves to your absolute will and pleasure, in order to save the remainder of our fellow-citizens and inhabitants of Calais, who have suffered great distress and misery. Condescend, then, out of your nobleness, to have compassion on us.'

"All the English barons, knights, and squires, that were assembled there in great numbers, wept at this sight; but king Edward eyed them with angry looks, for he hated much the people of Calais, because of the great losses he had suffered at sea by them. Forthwith he ordered the heads of the six citizens to be struck off. All present entreated the king to be more merciful, but he would not listen to them. Then sir Walter Mauny spoke:—'Ah, gentle king, I beseech you restrain your anger. Tarnish not your noble reputation by such an act as this! Truly, the whole world will cry out on your cruelty, if you should put to death these six worthy persons.' For all this, the king gave a wink to his marshal, and said, 'I will have it so;' and ordered the headsman to be sent for, adding, 'the men of Calais had done him such damage, it was fit they suffered for it.'

"At this, the queen of England, who was very near her lying-in, fell on her knees before king Edward, and with tears said,—'Ah, gentle sir, sithence I have crossed the sea with great peril to see you, I have never asked you one favour; now, I most humbly ask as a gift, for the sake of the Son of the blessed Mary, and as a proof of your love to me, the lives of these six men.'

"King Edward looked at her for some time in silence, and then said,—'Ah, lady, I wish you had been anywhere else than here; you have entreated in such a manner that I cannot refuse you. I therefore give them you—do as you please with them.'

"The queen conducted the six citizens to her apartments, and had the halters taken from about their necks; after which she new clothed them, and served them with a plentiful dinner; she then presented each with six nobles, and had them escorted out of the camp in safety."

The French historians, who, from mortified national pride, have endeavoured to invalidate this beautiful incident, pretend to do so by proving, as an inconsistency in the character of Philippa, that she took possession, a few days after the surrender of Calais, of the tenements belonging to one of her protégés, John Daire. They have likewise impugned the patriotism of Eustace St. Pierre,<sup>1</sup> because he remained in Calais, as Edward's subject. But king Edward granted immunity to all those who swore allegiance to him, and stayed in Calais; while those who chose expatriation, like John Daire, forfeited their tenements, which they certainly could not take with them. Now, Froissart has shown that Edward presented his Calisian captives to his queen, to "do with them what she pleased." This transfer gave Philippa rights over their

<sup>1</sup> Eustace was not a soldier, vowed to his banner, like the lord de Vienne, but a burgher, attached by many inhabitative ties to his town. He was firmly loyal to his prince, while Philip could extend kingly protection to his lieges at Calais: but when Philip was forced to leave Calais to its fate, the same necessity obliged Eustace to transfer his allegiance. Expatriation is not the bounden duty of a citizen.

persons and property, which she used most generously in regard to the first, but retained her claims over the possessions in the town, of those who refused to become subjects to her husband. The very fact, proved by deeds and charters, that Philippa became proprietress of John Daire's houses, greatly authenticates the statement of Froissart.

It would have been pleasant to record that Philippa restored the value of John Daire's tenements. But biography, unlike poetry or romance, seldom permits us to portray a character approaching perfection. Truth compels us to display the same person, by turns, merciful or ferocious, generous or acquisitive, according to the mutability of human passion. The philosophic observer of life will see no outrage on probability in the facts, that Philippa saved John Daire's life one day, and took possession of his vacated spoils the next week.

"The king, after he had bestowed these six citizens on queen Philippa, called to him sir Walter Mauny, and his two marshals, the earls of Warwick and Stafford, and said—'My lords, here are the keys of Calais town and castle; go and take possession.'<sup>1</sup> Directions were given for the castle to be prepared with proper lodgings for the king and queen. When this had been done, the king and queen mounted their steeds, and rode towards the town, which they entered with the sound of trumpets, drums, and all sorts of warlike instruments. The king remained in Calais till the queen was brought to bed of a daughter, named Margaret."

Three days before Edward and Philippa returned to England, the emperor Louis of Bavaria died, who had married Marguerite of Hainault, the eldest sister of the queen. Towards the close of the same year, Edward was elected emperor of Germany; an honour of which he very wisely declined the acceptance. At this time it was considered that the royal Philippa and her husband had touched the height of human prosperity.

With the exception of the trifling disappointment in the disposal of the hand of her eldest daughter, the year 1347 closed most auspiciously for Philippa and her warlike lord. But the military triumphs of England brought with them some corruption of manners. At that time the jewels and ornaments, that once decorated the females of France, were transferred to the persons of the English ladies, who, out of compliment to the queen's successful generalship, and the personal heroism of the valiant countess of Montfort, her kinswoman, began to give themselves the airs of warriors; they wore small jewelled daggers as ornaments at their bosoms, and their caps, formed of cambric or lawn, were cut like the aperture of a knight's helmet. But these objectionable caps brought their own punishment with them, being hideously unbecoming. The church was preparing suitable remonstrances against these unfeminine proceedings, when all pride, whether royal or national, was at once signally confounded by the awful visitation of pestilence which approached the shores of England, 1348.

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<sup>1</sup>Froissart. The siege lasted from June, 1346, to August, 1347. Walsingham declares king Edward spared the people of Calais in life and limb—an observation he would scarcely have made if the contrary had not been expected.



This pestilence was called emphatically, from its effects on the human body, the Black Death. Every household in London was smitten, and some wholly exterminated: nor did Philippa's royal family escape, for the cruel pestilence robbed her of the fairest of her daughters, under circumstances of peculiar horror.

The beauty and graces of the second daughter of Philippa, called the princess Joanna of Woodstock, were such as to be the themes of every minstrel; she was in her fifteenth year, when Alphonso, king of Castille, demanded her in marriage for his heir, the Infant Pedro, who afterwards attained an undesirable celebrity under the name of Pedro the Cruel. The princess had been nurtured and educated by that virtuous lady Marie St. Pol, the widowed countess of Pembroke, to whose munificent love of learning Cambridge owes one of her noblest foundations.<sup>1</sup> As a reward for rearing and educating the young princess, king Edward gave the countess, her governess, the manor of Stroud, in Kent, with many expressions of gratitude, calling her "his dearest cousin Marie de St. Pol."<sup>2</sup>

The fair Joanna was spared the torment of becoming the wife of the most furious man in Europe, by the more merciful plague of the Black Death. The royal bride sailed for Bordeaux, at the latter end of the summer of 1348, while her father-in-law, the king of Castille, travelled to the frontier city, Bayonne, with the Infant Don Pedro, to meet her. King Edward's loyal citizens of Bordeaux escorted the princess Joanna as far as Bayonne, in the cathedral of which city she was to give her hand to Pedro. On the very evening of her triumphal entry into Bayonne, the pestilence, out of all the assembled multitudes, seized on the fair young Plantagenet as a victim; it terminated her existence in a few hours: her Spanish bridegroom and the king, his father, followed her funeral procession on the very day and hour that she was appointed to give her hand as a bride, at the altar of that cathedral wherein she was buried.

The deep grief of the parents of Joanna is visible in the Latin letters, written by Edward III. to the king of Castille, to Don Pedro, and to the queen of Castille. If the Latinity of these letters will not bear the criticism of the classical scholar, they are, nevertheless, lofty in sentiment, and breathe an expression of parental tenderness seldom to be found in state papers.

"Your daughter and ours," he says to the queen of Castille, "was by nature wonderfully endowed with gifts and graces, but little does it now avail to praise them, or specify the charms of that beloved one, who is—O grief of heart!—for ever taken from us. Yet the debt of mortality must be paid, however deeply sorrow may drive the thorn, and our hearts be transpierced by anguish. Nor will our sighs and tears cancel the inevitable law of nature. Christ, the celestial spouse, has taken the maiden bride to be his spouse. She, in her innocent and immaculate

<sup>1</sup> This lady had been rendered a widow on her bridal day, by her newly wedded lord being killed at the tournament given in honour of his nuptials. The maiden widow never married again, but devoted her great wealth to charity and the promotion of learning.

<sup>2</sup> *Fœdera*, vol. v.

years, has been transferred to the virgin choir in heaven, where, for us below, she will perpetually intercede.”

The queen must have imagined that her royal and handsome progeny was doomed to a life of celibacy; for some extraordinary accident or other, had hitherto prevented the marriage of her daughters. Her heroic son Edward had been on the point of marrying several princesses, without his nuptials ever being brought to a conclusion.

A long attachment had subsisted, between him and his beautiful cousin, Joanna, daughter of his uncle, Edmund earl of Kent, and the lady had remained unwedded till her twenty-fifth year, after being divorced from the earl of Salisbury, to whom she had been contracted in her infancy. Queen Philippa had a great objection to her son's union with his cousin,<sup>1</sup> on account of the flightiness of the lady's disposition. After vainly hoping for the royal consent to her union with her cousin, Joanna gave her hand to Sir Thomas Holland; but still the Black Prince remained a bachelor.

After the grand crisis of the capture of Calais, Philippa resided chiefly in England. Our country felt the advantage of the beneficent presence of its queen. Philippa had in her youth established the woollen manufactures: she now turned her sagacious intellect towards working the coal-mines in Tynedale—a branch of national industry, whose inestimable benefits need not be dilated upon. The mines had been worked, with great profit, in the reign of Henry III., but the convulsions of the Scottish wars had stopped their progress. Philippa had estates in Tynedale, and she had long resided in its vicinity, during Edward's Scottish campaigns. It was an infallible result, that, wherever this great queen directed her attention, wealth and national prosperity speedily followed. Well did her actions illustrate her Flemish motto, *Iche wrude muche*, which obsolete words may be rendered, “I labour (or toil) much.” Soon after her return from Calais, she obtained a grant from her royal lord,<sup>2</sup> giving permission to her bailiff, Alan de Strothere, to work the mines of Alderneston, which had been worked in the days of king Henry III. and Edward I. From this re-opening of the Tynedale mines by Philippa proceeded our coal-trade, which, during the reign of her grandson, Henry IV., enriched the great merchant Whittington and the city of London.

The queen continued to increase the royal family. The princess Mary, who afterwards married the duke of Bretagne; prince William, born at Windsor, who died in his twelfth year; Edmund, afterwards duke of York, and Blanche, of the Tower,<sup>3</sup> were born before the surrender of Calais; the princess Margaret, and Thomas of Woodstock,

<sup>1</sup> Guthrie mentions the long celibacy of Joanna, the Fair Maid of Kent, previously to her union with Holland. Froissart speaks of Philippa's objections to the marriage of Edward with his cousin, and very freely enters into some scandalous stories regarding her.

<sup>2</sup> Caley's *Fœdera*. To this grant is added a curious clause, giving permission to Robert de Veteriponte and his heirs to be called kings of Tynedale.

<sup>3</sup> Walsingham.

afterwards Edward's presents to his queen on these occasions were munificent. One of his grants is thus affectionately worded—

July 20. The king orders his exchequer to pay "our Philippa, our dearest consort, five hundred pounds, to liquidate the expenses of her churching at Windsor."<sup>1</sup> This was on occasion of the birth of prince William, Philippa's second son of that name.

Philippa did not disdain the alliance of the great English nobles; her objection to the union of Edward, her chivalric heir, with Joanna the Fair, arose solely from disapprobation of the moral character of that princess.<sup>2</sup> Her next surviving son, Lionel, she not only united to an English maiden, but undertook the wardship and education of his young bride, as may be learned from this document. "January 1, 1347. Edward III. gives to his dearest consort Philippa the wardship of the person of Elizabeth de Burgh, daughter to the deceased earl of Ulster, (slain in Ireland,) with her lands and lordships, until Lionel, yet in tender years, shall take the young Elizabeth to wife."<sup>3</sup> Two of Philippa's sons were married to Englishwomen by her special agency.

Queen Philippa, with her son the Black Prince, paid a visit to Norwich in 1350, and there held a magnificent tournament. The royal mother and her heroic son were received by the inhabitants of the city, enriched by her statistical wisdom, with the utmost gratitude, and were entertained by the corporation, at an expense of 37l. 4s. 6½d., as appears by their records.

The grand victory of Poitiers distinguished the year 1357. A prouder day than that of Neville's Cross was the 5th of May, 1357, when Edward the Black Prince landed at Sandwich with his royal prisoner, king John, and presented him to his mother, after that glorious entry into London, where the prince tacitly gave John the honours of a suzerain, by permitting him to mount the famous white charger on which he rode at Poitiers, and which was captured with him.<sup>4</sup> At the same time that the queen received her vanquished kinsman, her son presented to her another prisoner, who, young as he was, was far fiercer in his captivity than the king of France; this was Philip, the fourth son of king John, a little hero of fourteen, who had fought desperately by his father's side on the lost field, and had been captured with some difficulty alive, and not till he was desperately wounded.<sup>5</sup> The first day of his arrival at the court of England, he gave a proof of his fierceness, by starting from the table, where he sat at dinner, with the king and queen and his father, and boxing the ears of king Edward's cup-bearer, for serving the king of England before the king of France; "for," he said, "though his father, king John, was unfortunate, he was the sovereign of the king of England." Edward and Philippa only smiled at the boy's petulance, and treated him with indulgent benevolence; and when

<sup>1</sup> Caley's *Fœdera*.

<sup>2</sup> Froissart, vol. xi.

<sup>3</sup> Caley's *Fœdera*.

<sup>4</sup> The white horse was always, in the middle ages, the sign of sovereignty. Giffard mentions the interesting fact that this white steed was a captive, as well as his master.—*Hist. of France*.

<sup>5</sup> Philip le Hardi, duke of Burgundy. He was a prince of great integrity, and always faithful to his unfortunate nephew, Charles VI.—*Giffard*.

he quarrelled with the prince of Wales, at a game of chess, they most courteously decided the disputed move in favour of prince Philip.

That renowned champion, sir Bertrand du Guesclin, was one of the prisoners of Poitiers. One day, when queen Philippa was entertaining at her court a number of the noble French prisoners, the prince of Wales proposed that Du Guesclin should name his own ransom, according to the etiquette of the times, adding, that whatever sum he mentioned, be it small or great, should set him free. The valiant Breton valued himself at a hundred thousand crowns; the prince of Wales started at the immense sum, and asked sir Bertrand "how he could ever expect to raise such an enormous ransom?" "I know," replied the hero, "a hundred knights in my native Bretagne, who would mortgage their last acre, rather than Du Guesclin should either languish in captivity, or be rated below his value. Yea, and there is not a woman in France now toiling at her distaff, who would not devote a year's earnings to set me free, for well have I deserved of their sex. And if all the fair spinners in France employ their hands to redeem me, think you, prince, whether I shall bide much longer with you?"

Queen Philippa, who had listened with great attention to the discussion between her son and his prisoner, now spoke—

"I name," she said, "fifty thousand crowns, my son, as my contribution towards your gallant prisoner's ransom; for though an enemy to my husband, a knight who is famed, for the courteous protection he has afforded to my sex, deserves the assistance of every woman."

Du Guesclin immediately threw himself at the feet of the generous queen, saying—

"Ah, lady, being the ugliest knight in France, I never reckoned on any goodness from your sex, excepting from those whom I had aided or protected by my sword, but your bounty will make me think less despicably of myself."

Philippa, as is usual in the brightest specimens of female excellence, was the friend of her own sex, and honoured those men most who paid the greatest reverence to women.

The most glorious festival ever known in England was that held at Windsor, in the commencement of the year 1358, for the diversion of the two royal prisoners, John, king of France, and David Bruce, of Scotland. The Round Tower at Windsor, despite of the heavy expenses of war, was completed, on purpose that the feast, called the Round Table of the Knights of the Garter, might be held within it. The captive majesties of France and Scotland were invited to that feast as guests, and sat one on each side of Edward III. King John and king David tilted at the lists.<sup>2</sup> The interest of the ceremony was further enhanced by the

<sup>1</sup> Giffard attributes this beautiful anecdote to Joanna, the wife of the Black Prince, and places the incident after the battle of Navarrête. We follow the authority of St. Pelaye, in his *History of Chivalry*, supported by several French historians. It is the subject of a spirited Breton ballad romance.

<sup>2</sup> Our young queen is in possession of two trophies of the triumphs of her great ancestors, Philippa and Edward, which are at the same time memorials of this

fatal accident which befel the stout earl of Salisbury, who was killed in one of the encounters at the lists. Report says, that king John, of France, was still more captivated with the beauty of lady Salisbury than king Edward had been, and as hopelessly, for that fair and virtuous woman retired into the deepest seclusion, after the calamitous death of her lord.<sup>1</sup> After the Windsor festival, Edward placed king John in an irksome captivity, and prepared for the re-invasion of France.

Queen Philippa embarked, with her husband, for the new campaign, on the 29th of October, 1359. All her sons were with the army, excepting the little prince, Thomas of Woodstock, who, at the redoubtable age of five years, was left guardian of the kingdom,<sup>2</sup> and represented the majesty of his father's person, by sitting on the throne when parliaments were held.

After Edward had marched through France without resistance, and (if the truth must be spoken) desolating, as he went, a bleeding and suffering country in a most ungenerous manner, his career was stopped, as he was hastening to lay siege to Paris, by the hand of God itself. One of those dreadful thunder-storms which at distant cycles pass over the continent of France,<sup>3</sup> literally attacked the invading army within two leagues of Chartres, and wreaked its utmost fury on the proud chivalry of England. Six thousand of Edward's finest horses, and one thousand of his bravest cavaliers, among whom were the heirs of Warwick and Morley, were struck dead before him. The guilty ambition of Edward smote his conscience; he knelt down on the spot, and, spreading his hands towards the church of Our Lady of Chartres, vowed to stop the effusion of blood, and make peace on the spot with France. His queen, who wished well for the noble-minded king of France, held him to his resolution; and a peace, containing tolerable articles for France, was concluded at Bretigny. The queen, king Edward, and the royal family, returned, and landed at Rye, 18th of May, ten days after the peace.

After the triumph of Poitiers, the king and queen no longer opposed the union of the prince of Wales with Joanna the Fair,<sup>4</sup> although that princess was four years older than Edward, and her character and disposition were far from meeting the approval of the queen. Edward and Joanna were married in the queen's presence, at Windsor Chapel, October 10, 1361. After this marriage, king Edward invested his son with the duchy of Aquitaine, and he departed, with his bride, in an evil hour, to

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high festival of the Round Table at Windsor; these are the suits of armour worn by king John and king David on that occasion.

<sup>1</sup> Dugdale. Milles.

<sup>2</sup> *Fædera*, vol. vi.

<sup>3</sup> It was considered that the accounts of this storm had been greatly exaggerated by the chroniclers, till that still more dreadful one ravaged France in 1790, and hastened, by the famine it brought, the French revolution.

<sup>4</sup> Joanna married the prince, a few months after the death of her first husband. Besides their nearness of kin, other impediments existed to their union; the prince had formed a still stronger relationship with his cousin, according to the laws of the Catholic church, by becoming sponsor to her two boys, and holding them in his arms at the baptismal font; and, above all, the divorce of Joanna from the earl of Salisbury was not considered legal. All these impediments were legalised by a bull, obtained some time after this marriage.—*Rymer's Fædera*.

govern that territory. Froissart, speaking of the farewell visit of the queen, says—

“I, John Froissart, author of these chronicles, was in the service of queen Philippa, when she accompanied king Edward and the royal family to Berkhamstead Castle, to take leave of the prince and princess of Wales on their departure for Aquitaine. I was at that time twenty-four years old, and one of the clerks of the chamber to my lady the queen. During this visit, as I was seated on a bench, I heard an ancient knight expounding some of the prophecies of Merlin to the queen’s ladies. According to him, neither the prince of Wales nor the duke of Clarence, though sons to king Edward, will wear the crown of England, but it will fall to the house of Lancaster.”

This gives a specimen of the conversation with which maids of honour in the reign of queen Philippa were entertained, not with scandal or fashions, but with the best endeavours of an ancient knight to tell a fortune, or peep into futurity, by the assistance of the wizard Merlin.

King John, soon after the peace, took leave of the queen, for the purpose of returning to France, that he might arrange for the payment of his ransom: he sent to England the young lord de Courcy, count of Soissons, as one of the hostages for its liquidation. During the sojourn of De Courcy in England, he won the heart of the lady Isabella, the eldest daughter of Edward and Philippa. After remaining some time in France, and finding it impossible to fulfil his engagements, king John returned to his captivity, and redeemed his parole and his hostages with this noble sentiment: “If honour were lost elsewhere upon earth, it ought to be found in the conduct of kings.” Froissart thus describes the return of this heroic, but unfortunate sovereign.

“News was brought to the king, who was at that time with queen Philippa at Eltham, (a very magnificent palace the English kings have seven miles from London,) that the captive king had landed at Dover. This was in 1364, the 1st of January. King Edward sent off a grand deputation, saying how much he and the queen were rejoiced to see him in England, and this, it may be supposed, all things considered, king John readily believed. King John offered at the shrine of Thomas à Becket, at Canterbury, on his journey, and taking the road to London he arrived at Eltham, where queen Philippa and king Edward were ready to receive him. It was on a Sunday, in the afternoon; there were, between that time and supper, many grand dances and carols, at which it seems the young lord de Courcy distinguished himself by singing and dancing. I can never relate how very honourably the king and queen behaved to king John at Eltham. They afterwards lodged him with great pomp in the palace of the Savoy, where he visited king Edward at Westminster, whenever he had a mind to see him or the queen, taking boat, and coming from Savoy-stairs by water to the palace.” But king John’s health was declining, and he died at the Savoy Palace the same year.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Knowing his end approaching, king John had certainly surrendered his person, in hopes of saving his country the expense of his ransom.

A marriage soon after took place, between the elegant De Courcy and the princess royal. Although an emperor's grandson, this nobleman could scarcely be considered a match for the daughter of Edward III.; but since the escape of her faithless betrothed, the count of Flanders, Isabella had entered into no marriage contract, and was, at the time of her nuptials, turned of thirty. On occasion of the marriage festivals, king Edward presented his queen with two rich corsets, one embroidered with the words *Myn biddinye*, and the other with her motto, *Ichc wrude muche*.<sup>1</sup> Prince Lionel at this time espoused the ward of queen Philippa, Elizabeth de Burgh, who brought, as dower, at least one-third of Ireland, with the mighty inheritance of the Clares, earls of Gloucester. Edward III. afterwards created Lionel duke of Clarence.

This prince, through whose daughter, married to Edmund Mortimer, the line of York derived their primogeniture, was a handsome and courageous Flemish giant; mild-tempered and amiable, as persons of great strength and stature, by a beneficent law of nature, usually are. Lionel is rather an obscure, though important person in English history: here is his portrait by the last of our rhyming chroniclers:

"In all the world there was no prince him like,  
Of high stature and of all seemliness  
Above all men within the whole kingrike (kingdom),  
By the shoulders might be seen, doubtless,  
In hall was he maid-like for gentleness,  
In other places famed for rhetoric,  
But in the field a lion MARMORIKE."<sup>2</sup>

Death soon dissolved the wedlock of Elizabeth de Burgh: she left a daughter but a few days old. This motherless babe the queen Philippa adopted for her own, and became sponsor to her, with the countess of Warwick, as we learn from the Friar's Genealogy, when mentioning Lionel of Clarence:

"His wife was dead and at Clare buried,  
And no heir had be but his daughter fair,  
Philippe, that hight as chronicles specified,  
Whom queen Philippe christened for his heir,  
The archbishop of York for her compeer;  
Her godmother also was of Warwick countess;  
A lady likewise of great worthiness."

John of Gaunt, the third surviving son of Philippa, married Blanche, the heiress of Lancaster; the princess Mary was wedded to the duke of Bretagne, but died early in life. Edmund Langley, earl of Cambridge, afterwards duke of York, married Isabella of Castille, whose sister, his brother, John of Gaunt, took for his second wife. The youngest prince, Thomas of Woodstock, afterwards created duke of Gloucester, married an English lady, the co-heiress of Humphrey de Bohun, constable of England. Margaret, the fifth daughter of Edward III., was given in mar-

<sup>1</sup> We owe this curious fact to sir Harris Nicolas's excellent work on the Order of the Garter.

<sup>2</sup> What sort of thing this may be, we have not yet ascertained.

riage to the earl of Pembroke; she was one of the most learned ladies of her age, and a distinguished patroness of Chaucer.<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding their great strength and commanding stature, scarcely one of the sons of Philippa reached old age; even "John of Gaunt, time-honoured Lancaster," was only fifty-nine at his demise: the premature introduction to the cares of state, the weight of plate armour, and the violent exercise in the tilt-yard—by way of relaxation from the severer toils of partisan warfare—seem to have brought early old age on this gallant brotherhood of princes. The queen had been the mother of twelve children; eight survived her.

Every one of the sons of Philippa were famous champions in the field. The Black Prince and John of Gaunt, were learned, elegant, and brilliant, and strongly partook of the genius of Edward I. and the Provençal Plantagenets. Lionel and Edmund were good-natured and brave. They were comely in features, and gigantic in stature; they possessed no great vigour of intellect, and were both rather addicted to the pleasures of the table. Thomas of Woodstock was fierce, petulant, and rapacious; he possessed, however, considerable accomplishments, and is reckoned among royal and noble authors; he wrote a history "of the Laws of Battle," which is perspicuous in style; he was the great patron of Gower the poet, who belonged originally to the household of this prince.

The queen saw the promise of a successor to the throne of England, in the progeny of her best-beloved son Edward. Her grandson Richard was born at Bordeaux, before she succumbed to her fatal malady.

Philippa had not the misery of living to see the change in the prosperity of her family; to witness the long pining decay of the heroic prince of Wales; the grievous change in his health and disposition; or the imbecility, that gradually took possession of the once mighty mind of her husband. Before these reverses took place, the queen was seized with a dropsical malady, under which she languished about two years. All her sons were absent, on the continent, when her death approached, excepting her youngest, Thomas of Woodstock. The Black Prince had just concluded his Spanish campaign, and was ill in Gascony. Lionel of Clarence was at the point of death in Italy; the queen's secretary, Froissart, had accompanied that prince, when he went to be married to Violante of Milan. On the return of Froissart, he found his royal mistress was dead, and he thus describes her deathbed, from the detail of those who were present and heard her last words. "I must now speak<sup>2</sup> of the death of the most courteous, liberal, and noble lady that ever reigned in her time, the lady Philippa of Hainault, queen of England. While her son, the duke of Lancaster, was encamped in the valley of

<sup>1</sup> Philippa, in conjunction with her son, John, duke of Lancaster, warmly patronised Chaucer. With this queen, the court favour of the father of English verse expired. He was neglected by Richard II. and his queen, as all his memoirs will testify. Nor did the union of his wife's sister with the duke of Lancaster draw him from his retirement.

<sup>2</sup> Froissart, vol. iv. p. 20. Froissart wrote an elegy in verse, on the death of his patroness, queen Philippa, which has not been preserved.



Tourneham, ready to give battle to the duke of Burgundy, this death happened in England, to the infinite misfortune of king Edward, his children, and the whole kingdom. That excellent lady the queen, who had done so much good, aiding all knights, ladies, and damsels, when distressed, who had applied to her, was at this time dangerously sick at Windsor Castle; and every day her disorder increased. When the good queen perceived that her end approached, she called to the king, and extending her right hand from under the bedclothes, put it into the right hand of King Edward, who was oppressed with sorrow, and thus spoke—

“We have, my husband, enjoyed our long union in happiness, peace, and prosperity. But I entreat, before I depart, and we are for ever separated in this world, that you will grant me three requests.” King Edward, with sighs and tears, replied—“Lady, name them; whatever be your requests, they shall be granted.” “My lord,” she said, “I beg you will fulfil whatever engagements I have entered into with merchants for their wares, as well on this as on the other side of the sea; I beseech you to fulfil whatever gifts or legacies I have made, or left to churches wherein I have paid my devotions, and to all my servants, whether male or female; and when it shall please God to call you hence, you will choose no other sepulchre than mine, and that you will lie by my side in the cloisters of Westminster Abbey.” The king in tears replied, “Lady, all this shall be done.”

“Soon after, the good lady made the sign of the cross on her breast, and having recommended to the king her youngest son Thomas, who was present, praying to God, she gave up her spirit, which I firmly believe was caught by holy angels, and carried to the glory of heaven, for she had never done anything by thought or deed to endanger her soul. Thus died this admirable queen of England, in the year of grace 1369. the vigil of the Assumption of the Virgin, the 14th of August. Information of this heavy loss was carried to the English army at Tourneham, which greatly afflicted every one, more especially her son, John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster.”

Philippa's words were not complied with to the letter; her grave is not by her husband's side at Westminster Abbey, but at his feet. Her statue in alabaster is placed on the monument.<sup>1</sup> Skelton's translation of her Latin epitaph, hung on a tablet close by her tomb, is as follows :

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<sup>1</sup> Stow gives names to the numerous images which surround the tomb, on the authority of an old MS. At the feet are the king of Navarre, the king of Bohemia, the king of Scots, the king of Spain, and the king of Sicily. At the head, William earl of Hainault, Philippa's father; John, king of France, her uncle's son; Edward III., her husband; the emperor, her brother-in-law; and Edward prince of Wales, her son. On the left side are Joanna, queen of Scots, her sister-in-law; John earl of Cornwall, her brother-in-law; Joanna, princess of Wales, her daughter-in-law, and the duchesses of Clarence and Lancaster; the princess Isabella, and the princes Lionel, John, Edmund and Thomas. On the right side of the tomb may be seen her mother, her brother and his wife, her nephew Louis of Bavaria, her uncle John of Hainault, her daughters Mary and Margaret, and Charles duke of Brabant.

"*Faire Philippe, William Hainault's child, and younger daughter deare,  
Of roseate hue and beauty bright, in tomb lies billed here;  
King Edward through his mother's will and nobles' good consent,  
Took her to wife, and joyfully with her his time he spent.  
Her brother John, a martial man, and eke a valiant knight,  
Did link this woman to this king in bonds of marriage bright.  
This match and marriage thus in blood did bind the Flemings sure  
To Englishmen, by which they did the Frenchmen's wreck procure.  
This Philippe, dowered in gifts full rare, and treasures of the mind,  
In beauty bright, religion, faith, to all and each most kind,  
A fruitful mother Philippe was, full many a son she bred,  
And brought forth many a worthy knight, hardy and full of dread;  
A careful nurse to students all, at Oxford she did found  
Queen's College, and dame Pallas school, that did her fame resound.  
The wife of Edward dear,  
Queen Philippe lieth here.  
Learn to live."*

Truth obliges us to divest queen Philippa of one good deed, which was in fact out of her power to perform; she is generally considered to be the first foundress of the magnificent Queen's College, at Oxford. It was founded, indeed, by her chaplain,—that noble character, Robert de Eglesfield,<sup>1</sup> who, with modesty equal to his learning and merits, placed it under the protection of his royal mistress, and called it her foundation, and the College of the Queen.

Philippa herself, the consort of a monarch perpetually engaged in foreign war, and the mother of a large family, contributed but a mite towards this splendid foundation: this was a yearly rent of twenty marks, to the sustenance of six scholar-chaplains, to be paid by her receiver. Queen Philippa's principal charitable donation was to the Hospital of the Nuns of St. Katherine, by the Tower. She likewise left donations to the canons of the new chapel of St. Stephen, which Edward III. had lately built, as the domestic place of worship to Westminster Palace.

The only shade of unpopularity ever cast on the conduct of Philippa was owing to the rapacity of her purveyors, after her children grew up. The royal family was numerous, and the revenues, impoverished by constant war, were very slender, and therefore every absolute due was enforced, from tenants of the crown, by the purveyors of the royal household.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>History of the University of Oxford.

<sup>2</sup>These tormenting adjuncts to feudality used to help themselves to twenty-five quarters of corn, instead of twenty, by taking heap, instead of strike, measure, and were guilty of many instances of oppression, in the queen's name. Archbishop Islip wrote to Edward III. a most pathetic letter on the rapacity of the royal purveyors. He says, "the king ought to make a law enforcing honest payment for all goods needed by his household. Then," continues he, "all men will bring necessaries to your gate, as they did in the time of Henry, your great-grandfather, at whose approach all men rejoiced." He declares, "that he, the Archbishop himself, trembles at hearing the king's horn, whether he haps to be in his house or at mass; when one of the king's servants knocks at the gate, he trembles more, when he comes to the door still more, and this terror continues as long as the king stays, on account of the various evils done to the poor. He fears the king's harbingers come not on behalf of God, but of the devil. When

The damsels of the queen's bedchamber were pensioned by king Edward after her death, according to her request. He charges his exchequer, "to pay during the terms of their separate lives, on account of their good and faithful services to Philippa, late queen of England; first to the beloved damsel, Alicia de Preston,<sup>1</sup> ten marks yearly, at Pasche and Michaelmas; likewise to Matilda Fisher; to Elizabeth Pershore; to Johanna Kawley, ten marks yearly; to Johanna Cosin, to Philippa the Pycard,<sup>2</sup> and to Agatha Liergin, a hundred shillings yearly; and to Matilda Radcroft and Agnes de Saxilby, five marks yearly."

The name of Alice Perrers does not appear on this list of beloved damsels, but a little further on, in the *Fœdera*, occurs a well-known and disgraceful grant. "Know all, that we give and concede to our beloved Alicia Perrers, late damsel of the chamber to our dearest consort Philippa deceased, and to her heirs and executors, all the jewels, goods, and chattels that the said queen left in the hands of Euphemia, who was wife to Walter de Heselarton, knight, and the said Euphemia is to deliver them to the said Alicia, on receipt of this our order."

It is to be feared that the king's attachment to this woman had begun during Philippa's lingering illness, for in 1368 she obtained a gift of a manor that had belonged to the king's aunt, and in the course of 1369 she was enriched by the grant of several manors.<sup>3</sup>

But we will not pursue this subject; we are not obliged to trace the events of the dotage and folly of the once great Edward, or show the absurdity, of which he was guilty, when he made the infamous Alice Perrers the queen's successor in his affections.

During his youth, and the brilliant maturity of his life, Philippa's royal partner was worthy of the intense and faithful love she bore him. According to this portrait Edward was not only a king, but a king among men, highly gifted in mind, person, and genius.

"Edward III. was just six feet in stature, exactly shaped, and strongly made; his limbs beautifully turned, his face and nose somewhat long and high, but exceedingly comely; his eyes sparkling like fire, his looks manly, and his air and movements most majestic. He was well versed

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the horn is heard every one trembles, and when the harbinger arrives, instead of saying 'Fear not,' as the good angel did — he cries, 'He must have oats, and he must have hay, and he must have straw, and litter for the king's horses.' A second comes in, and he must have geese and hens, and many other things. A third is at his heels, and he must have bread and meat." The archbishop prays the king "not to delay till the morrow the remedy for these evils, which were only during the years of the king's father and grandfather; that it is contrary to all laws, divine and human, and on account of it many souls are now in hell" — *Archæologia*.

<sup>1</sup> *Fœdera*, vol. vi. p. 648.

<sup>2</sup> Supposed to be Chaucer's wife. She was sister to Catherine Roet, the third wife of John of Gaunt. Her father was an attendant on Philippa, and employed in Guienne. He was from the borders of Picardy; hence the appellation of his daughter.

<sup>3</sup> Brayley and Britton's *Westminster*. They on very good grounds suppose that Alice had two daughters by the king, for whom these excessive grants were to provide.

in law, history, and the divinity of the times : he understood and spoke readily Latin, French, Spanish, and German."

Whilst the court was distracted with the factions which succeeded the death of the Black Prince, when John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, was suspected of aiming at the crown, a most extraordinary story was circulated in England, relating to a confession supposed to be made by queen Philippa, on her deathbed, to William of Wykeham, bishop of Winchester.

"That John of Gaunt was neither the son of Philippa, nor Edward III., but a porter's son of Ghent, for the queen told him that she brought forth, not a son, but a daughter at Ghent, that she overlaid and killed the little princess by accident, and dreading the wrath of king Edward for the death of his infant, she persuaded the porter's wife, a Flemish woman, to change her living son, who was born at the same time, for the dead princess ; and so the queen nourished and brought up the man now called duke of Lancaster, which she bare not ; and all these things did the queen on her deathbed declare, in confession to bishop Wykeham, and earnestly prayed him 'that if ever it chanceth this son of the Flemish porter affecteth the kingdom, he will make his stock and lineage known to the world, lest a false heir should inherit the throne of England.'"<sup>1</sup>

The inventor of this story did not remember, that of all the sons of Philippa, John of Gaunt most resembled his royal sire in the high majestic lineaments and piercing eyes, which spoke the descent of the Plantagenets from southern Europe. The portraits of Edward III., of the elegant Black Prince,<sup>2</sup> and of John of Gaunt, are all marked with as strong an air of individuality, as if they had been painted by the accurate Holbein.<sup>3</sup>

The close observer of history will not fail to notice that with the life of queen Philippa, the happiness, the good fortune, and even the respectability of Edward III. and his family departed, and scenes of strife, sorrow, and folly, distracted the court, where she had once promoted virtue, justice, and well-regulated munificence.

<sup>1</sup> Archbishop Parker's Ecclesiastical History, and a Latin Chronicle of the reign of Edward III., printed in the *Archæologia*. Some slur had been cast on the legitimacy of Richard the Second by the Lancastrian party. John of Gaunt was then a decided partisan of Wickliffe, and this story seems raised by the opposite party for the purpose of undermining his influence with the common people.

<sup>2</sup> Pere Orleans affirms that the prince of Wales, just before the battle of Poitiers, was generally called the Black Prince, because he wore black armour in order to set off the fairness of his complexion, and so to improve his *bonne mine*. It is to be noted that Froissart never calls him the Black Prince.

<sup>3</sup> See the beautiful engravings by Vertue, from originals, in Carte's folio History of England, vol. ii.

# ANNE OF BOHEMIA,

SURNAMED THE GOOD.

## FIRST QUEEN OF RICHARD II.

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Descent of Anne of Bohemia—Letter of the empress Elizabeth—Anne of Bohemia betrothed—Sets out for England—Detained at Brabant—Dangers by land and sea—Lands in England—Her progress to London—Pageants at reception—Marriage and coronation—Queen's fashions and improvements—Queen favourable to the Reformation—King's campaign in the north—Queen's knight murdered—King's brother condemned—Death of the princess of Wales—The queen's favourite maid of honour—Executions of the queen's servants—Queen pleads for their lives—Grand tournament—Queen presides—Queen intercedes for the city of London—Her visit to the city—Gifts to her—Her entrance at Westminster Hall—Her prayer to the king—Richard grants her request—Queen's sudden death—King's frantic grief—His summons to the burial—Monument—Inscription—Goodness of the queen.

THE ancestors of the princess Anne of Bohemia originated from the same country as the Flemish Philippa; she was the nearest relative to that beloved queen whose hand was attainable; and by means of her uncle, duke Wincellaus of Brabant, she brought the same popular and profitable commercial alliance to England.

Anne of Bohemia was the eldest daughter of the emperor Charles IV., by his fourth wife, Elizabeth of Pomerania;<sup>1</sup> she was born about 1367, at Prague, in Bohemia. The regency who governed England during

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<sup>1</sup> The mother of Anne was the daughter of Boleslaus, duke of Pomerania, and granddaughter to Casimir the Great, king of Poland. The empress Elizabeth received on her marriage day a noble dowry, the gift of her royal grandsire of Poland, amounting to 100,000 florins of gold. Elizabeth espoused the emperor Charles, in 1363; the year afterwards she became the mother of Sigismund, afterwards emperor of Germany, who was brother, both by father and mother, to queen Anne. The emperor Charles IV., of the line of Luxembourg, was son of the blind king of Bohemia, well known to the readers of our chivalric annals. Though bereft of his sight, the king of Bohemia would be led by his knights, one at each side of his bridle, into the *mêlée* at the gallant fight of Cressy, where, as he said, "he struck good strokes more than one," for his brother-in-law, Philip of Valois. After "charging with all his chivalry" in a tremendous line, with his battle-steed linked by chains to the saddles of his knights, the blind hero perished in this desperate attempt to redeem the "fortune of France." The motto of this brave man, and the ostrich plumes of his crest were assumed by the young victor, our Black Prince, as the proudest trophies of that glorious day. Such was the grandsire of Anne of Bohemia.

King Richard II.'s minority, demanded her hand for their young king, just before her father died in the year 1380.

On the arrival of the English ambassador, Sir Simon Burley, at Prague, the imperial court took measures which seem not a little extraordinary at the present day. England was to Bohemia a sort of *terra incognita*; and as a general knowledge of geography and statistics was certainly not among the list of imperial accomplishments in the fourteenth century, the empress despatched duke Primislaus of Saxony, on a voyage of discovery, to ascertain, for the satisfaction of herself and the princess, what sort of country England might be.

Whatever were the particulars of the duke's discoveries—and his homeward despatches must have been of a most curious nature,—it appears he kept a scrutinizing eye in regard to pecuniary interest. His report seems to have been on the whole satisfactory, since in the *Fœdera* we find a letter from the imperial widow of Charles IV., to the effect "that I, Elizabeth, Roman empress, always Augusta, likewise queen of Bohemia, empower duke Primislaus to treat with Richard, king of England, concerning the wedlock of that excellent virgin, the damsel Anne, born of us, and in our name to order and dispose, and, as if our own soul were pledged, to swear to the fulfilment of every engagement."

When the duke of Saxony returned to Germany, he carried presents of jewels, from the king of England, to the ladies who had the care of the princess's education.<sup>1</sup>

"The duke of Lancaster, John of Gaunt, would willingly have seen the king his nephew married to his daughter, whom he had by the lady Blanche of Lancaster; but it was thought that the young lady was too nearly related, being the king's cousin-german. Sir Simon Burley, a sage and valiant knight, who had been king Richard's tutor, and had been much beloved by the prince of Wales, his father, was deputed to go to Germany, respecting the marriage with the emperor's sister. The duke and duchess of Brabant, from the love they bore the king of England, received his envoy most courteously, and said it would be a good match for their niece. But the marriage was not immediately concluded, for the damsel was young; added to this, there shortly happened in England great misery and tribulation,"<sup>2</sup> by the calamitous insurrection of Wat Tyler.

Richard II. was the sole surviving offspring of the gallant Black Prince and Joanna of Kent. Born in the luxurious south, the first accents of Richard of Bordeaux were formed in the poetical language of Provence, and his infant tastes linked to music and song—tastes which assimilated ill with the manners of his own court and people. His mother and half-brothers, after the death of his princely father, had brought up the future king of England with the most ruinous personal indulgence, and unconstitutional ideas of his own infallibility. He had inherited more of his mother's levity, than his father's strength of character; yet the domestic affections of Richard were of the most vivid and enduring nature, especially towards the females of his family; and the state of

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

distress and terror to which he saw his mother reduced by the insolence of Wat Tyler's mob, was the chief stimulant of his gallant behaviour when that rebel fell beneath the sword of Walworth.

When these troubles were suppressed, time had obviated the objection to the union of Richard and Anne. The young princess had attained her fifteenth year, and was considered capable of giving a rational consent to her own marriage; and after sending a letter to the council of England, saying, she became the wife of their king with full and free will, "she set out," says Froissart, "on her perilous journey, attended by the duke of Saxony and his duchess, who was her aunt, and with a suitable number of knights and damsels. They came through Brabant to Brussels, where the duke Wenceslaus and his duchess received the young queen, and her company, very grandly. The lady Anne remained with her uncle and aunt more than a month; she was afraid of proceeding, for she had been informed there were twelve large armed vessels full of Normans, on the sea between Calais and Holland, that seized and pillaged all that fell in their hands, without any respect to persons. The report was current, that they cruised in those seas, awaiting the coming of the king of England's bride, because the king of France and his council were very uneasy at Richard's German alliance, and were desirous of breaking the match."

"Detained by these apprehensions, the betrothed queen remained at Brussels more than a month, till the duke of Brabant, her uncle, sent the lords of Rousselans and Bosquehoir to remonstrate with king Charles V., who was also the near relative of Anne. Upon which king Charles remanded the Norman cruisers into port, but he declared that he granted this favour solely out of love to his cousin Anne, and out of no regard or consideration for the king of England. The duke and duchess were very much pleased, and so were all those about to cross the sea. The royal bride took leave of her uncle and aunt, and departed for Brussels. Duke Wenceslaus had the princess escorted with one hundred spears. She passed through Bruges, where the earl of Flanders received her very magnificently, and entertained her for three days. She then set out for Gravelines, where the earl of Salisbury waited for her with five hundred spears, and as many archers. This noble escort conducted her in triumph to Calais, which belonged to her betrothed lord. Then the Brabant spearmen took their departure, after seeing her safely delivered to the English governor. The lady Anne stayed at Calais only till the wind became favourable. She embarked on a Wednesday morning, and the same day arrived at Dover, where she tarried to repose herself two days."

The young bride had need of some interval, to compose herself, after her narrow escape from destruction. All our native historians notice the following strange fact, which must have originated in a tremendous ground-swell. "Scarcely," says the chronicler,<sup>1</sup> "had the Bohemian princess set her foot on the shore, when a sudden convulsion of the sea took place, unaccompanied with wind, and unlike any winter storm;

<sup>1</sup>Quoted by Milles.

but the water was so violently shaken and troubled, and put in such furious commotion, that the ship, in which the young queen's person was conveyed, was very terribly rent in pieces before her very face, and the rest of the vessels that rode in company were tossed so that it astonished all beholders."

The English parliament was sitting, when intelligence came that the king's bride, after all the difficulties and dangers of her progress from Prague, had safely arrived at Dover, on which it was prorogued; but first, funds were appointed, that with all honour the bride might be presented to the young king.

On the third day after her arrival, the lady Anne set forth on her progress to Canterbury, where she was met by the king's uncle Thomas, who received her with the utmost reverence and honour. When she approached the Blackheath, the lord mayor and citizens, in splendid dresses, greeted her, and with all the ladies and damsels, both from town and country, joined her cavalcade, making so grand an entry in London, that the like had scarcely ever been seen. The Goldsmiths' company (seven score of the men of this rich guild) splendidly arrayed themselves to meet, as they said, the "Cæsar's sister;" nor was their munificence confined to their own persons; they further put themselves to the expense of sixty shillings, for the hire of seven minstrels, with foil on their hats and chaperons, and expensive vestures, to do honour to the imperial bride; and to two shillings further expense, "for potations for the said minstrels."<sup>1</sup> At the upper end of Chepe was a pageant of a castle with towers, from two sides of which ran fountains of wine. From these towers beautiful damsels blew in the faces of the king and queen gold leaf; this was thought a device of extreme elegance and ingenuity; they likewise threw counterfeit gold florins before the horses' feet of the royal party.

Anne of Bohemia was married to Richard II. in the chapel-royal of the palace of Westminster, the newly erected structure of St. Stephen. "On the wedding-day, which was the twentieth after Christmas, there were," says Froissart, "mighty feastings. That gallant and noble knight, sir Robert Namur, accompanied the queen, from the time when she quitted Prague, till she was married. The king at the end of the week carried his queen to Windsor, where he kept open and royal house. They were very happy together. She was accompanied by the king's mother, the princess of Wales, and her daughter, the duchess of Bretagne, half-sister to king Richard, who was then in England, soliciting for the restitution of the earldom of Richmond, which had been taken from her husband by the English regency, and settled in part of dower on queen Anne. Some days after the marriage of the royal pair, they returned to London, and the coronation of the queen was performed most magnificently. At the young queen's earnest request, a general pardon was granted by the king, at her consecration."<sup>2</sup> The afflicted people stood in need of this respite, as the executions, since Tyler's insurrection, had been bloody and barbarous beyond all precedent. The

<sup>1</sup> Herbert's History of the City Companies.

<sup>2</sup> Tyrrell. Walsingham. Rymer.



land was reeking with the blood of the unhappy peasantry, when the humane intercession of the gentle Anne of Bohemia put a stop to the executions.

This mediation obtained for Richard's bride the title of "the good queen Anne;" and years, instead of impairing the popularity, usually so evanescent in England, only increased the esteem felt by her subjects for this beneficent princess.

Grand tournaments were held directly after the coronation. Many days were spent in these solemnities, wherein the German nobles, who had accompanied the queen to England, displayed their chivalry to the great delight of the English. Our chroniclers call Anne of Bohemia, "the beauteous queen." At fifteen or sixteen, a blooming German girl is a very pleasing object; but her beauty must have been limited to stature and complexion, for the features of her statue are homely and undignified. A narrow, high-pointed forehead, a long upper lip, cheeks, whose fulness increased towards the lower part of the face, can scarcely entitle her to claim a reputation for beauty. But the head-dress she wore must have neutralized the defects of her face in some degree, by giving an appearance of breadth to her narrow forehead. This was the horned cap which constituted the head-gear of the ladies of Bohemia and Hungary; and in this "moony tire" did the bride of Richard present herself to the astonished eyes of her female subjects.<sup>1</sup>

Queen Anne made some atonement for being the importer of these hideous fashions, by introducing the use of pins, such as are used at our present toilets. Our chroniclers declare, that, previously to her arrival in England, the English fair fastened their robes with skewers; a great misrepresentation, for, even as early as the Roman empire, the use of pins was known; and British barrows have been opened, wherein were found numbers of very neat and efficient little ivory pins, which had been used in arranging the grave-clothes of the dead; and can these irreverent chroniclers suppose that English ladies used worse fastenings for their robes in the fourteenth century?

Side-saddles were the third new fashion, brought into England by Anne of Bohemia: they were different from those used at present, which were invented, or first adopted, by Catherine de Medicis, queen of France. The side-saddle of Anne of Bohemia was like a bench with a hanging step, where both feet were placed. This mode of riding required a footman or squire at the bridle-rein of the lady's palfrey, and was chiefly used in processions.

According to the fashion of the age, the young queen had a device,

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<sup>1</sup>This cap was at least two feet in height, and as many in width; its fabric was built of wire and pasteboard, like a very wide-spreading mitre, and over these horns was extended some glittering tissue or gauze. Monstrous and outrageous were the horned caps that reared their heads in England, directly the royal bride appeared in one; these formidable novelties expanded their wings on every side, till at church or procession the diminished heads of lords and knights were eclipsed by their ambitious partners. The church declared they were "the moony tire," denounced by Ezekiel; likely enough, for they had been introduced by Bohemian crusaders from Syria.

which all her knights were expected to wear at tournaments; but her device was, we think, a very stupid one, being an ostrich, with a bit of iron in his mouth.<sup>1</sup>

At the celebration of the festival of the Order of the Garter, 1384, queen Anne wore a robe of violet cloth dyed in grain, the hood lined with scarlet, the robe lined with fur. She was attended by a number of noble ladies, who are mentioned "as newly received into the Society of the Garter." They were habited in the same costume as their young queen.<sup>2</sup>

The royal spouse of Anne was remarkable for the foppery of his dress; he had one coat estimated at thirty thousand marks. Its chief value must have arisen from the precious stones with which it was adorned. This was called apparel "broidered of stone."<sup>3</sup>

Notwithstanding the great accession of luxury that followed this marriage, the daughter of the Cæsars, (as Richard proudly called his bride,) not only came portionless to the English throne matrimonial, but her husband had to pay a very handsome sum for the honour of calling her his own: he paid to her brother 10,000 marks, for the imperial alliance, besides being at the whole charge of her journey. The jewels of the duchy of Aquitaine, the floriated coronet, and many brooches in the form of animals, were pawned to the Londoners, in order to raise money for the expenses of the bridal.

To Anne of Bohemia is attributed the honour of being the first, in that illustrious band of princesses, who were the nursing mothers of the Reformation.<sup>4</sup> The Protestant church inscribes her name at the commencement of the illustrious list in which are seen those of Anne Boleyn, Katharine Parr, lady Jane Grey, and queen Elizabeth. Whether the young queen brought those principles with her, or imbibed them from her mother-in-law, the princess of Wales, it is not easy to ascertain. A passage quoted by Huss, the Bohemian reformer, leads to the inference that Anne was used to read the Scriptures in her native tongue. "It is possible," says Wickliffe, in his work called the 'Threefold Bond of Love,' "that our noble queen of England, sister of the Cæsar, may have

<sup>1</sup> Camden's Remains. It is possible that this was not a device, but an armorial bearing, and had some connexion with the ostrich plume the Black Prince took from her grandfather at Cressy. The dukes of Austria are perpetually called dukes of *Ostrich*, by the English writers, as late as Speed. Has this term any punning connexion with this device and the Bohemian crest of ostrich feathers?

<sup>2</sup> See sir Harris Nicolas, History of the Order of the Garter.

<sup>3</sup> In this reign the shoes were worn with pointed toes of an absurd and inconvenient length. Camden quotes an amusing passage from a quaint work, entitled Eulogium on the Extravagance of the Fashions of this Reign. "Their shoes and pattens are snowted and piked up more than a finger long, which they call Cracowes, resembling the devil's claws, which were fastened to the knees with chains of gold and silver, and thus were *they* garmented which were lyons in the hall, and hares in the field."

<sup>4</sup> Fox the martyrologist declares, that the Bohemians who attended queen Anne first introduced the works of Wickliffe to John Huss; count Valerian Krasinski, in his recent valuable history of the Reformation in Poland, confirms this assertion from the records of his country.

the gospel written in three languages, Bohemian, German, and Latin: now, to hereticate her (brand her with heresy) on that account, would be Luciferian folly." The influence of queen Anne over the mind of her young husband was certainly employed by Joanna, princess of Wales,<sup>1</sup> to aid her in saving the life of Wickliffe, when in great danger at the council of Lambeth, in 1382.<sup>2</sup>

Joanna, princess of Wales, was a convert of Wickliffe, who had been introduced to her by his patron, the duke of Lancaster. Joanna, aided by her daughter-in-law, swayed the ductile mind of king Richard to their wishes.<sup>3</sup>

Soon after, the queen was separated from her husband by a war in Scotland. The most remarkable incident of his campaign was the murder of Lord Stafford, by the king's half-brother, John Holland. Jealousy of the queen's favour, and malice against her adherents, appear to be the secret motives of this deed. Stafford was a peerless chevalier, adored by the English army, and, for his virtuous conduct, in high favour with Anne of Bohemia, who called him "her knight;" and he was actually on his way to London, with messages from the king to the queen, when this fatal encounter took place.<sup>4</sup> The ostensible cause of the murder likewise was connected with the queen; as we learn from Froissart, that the archers of lord Stafford, when protecting sir Meles, a Bohemian knight then with the army, who was a friend of queen Anne, slew a favourite squire belonging to sir John Holland; and to revenge a punishment which this man had brought upon himself, sir John cut lord Stafford down, without any personal provocation. The grief of the earl of Stafford, his entreaties for justice on the murderer of his son, and, above all, the atrocious circumstances of the case, wrought on king Richard to vow that an exemplary act of justice should be performed on John Holland, (brother though he might be,) as soon as he ventured from the shrine of St. John of Beverley, whither this homicide had fled for sanctuary. In vain Joanna, princess of Wales, the mutual mother of the king and murderer, pleaded with Richard, after his return from Scot-

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<sup>1</sup> That Anne's mother-in-law was the active protectress of Wickliffe is apparent from Dr. Lingard's words, vol. iv. p. 189. "Some said that the two bishops were intimidated, by a message from the princess of Wales; by Wickliffe himself, his escape was considered and celebrated as a triumph." Modern writers have usually attributed this good deed to Anne, but she was too young to do more than follow the lead of her mother-in-law. From Walsingham, we find that several knights of the household were accused of Lollardism; from various authorities, we find sir Simon Burley, sir Lewis Clifford, and sir John Oldcastle, were more or less accused as disciples of the new doctrine.

<sup>2</sup> Wickliffe died in his bed, at Lutterworth, in 1384, and when darker times arose after the death of this beneficent queen, persecution found nought to vent its spite upon excepting the insensible bones of the "evil parson of Lutterworth," as he was called, when his remains were exhumed and cast into the brook which runs near his village; but if Wickliffe had lived in these days he could not have escaped being called a papist, for he was actually struck for death in the act of celebrating the mass, at the altar of his village church; therefore while living he was never cut off from the communion of the church of Rome

<sup>3</sup> Life of Wickliffe, Biogra. Brit.

<sup>4</sup> Speed and Froissart.

land, that the life of sir John might be spared. After four days' incessant lamentation, the king's mother died on the fifth day, at the royal castle of Wallingford. Richard's resolution failed him at this catastrophe, and, when too late to save his mother, he pardoned the criminal. The aggrieved persons, in this unhappy adventure, were the friends of the queen, but there is no evidence that she excited her husband's wrath.<sup>1</sup> The homicide who had occasioned so much trouble departed, on an atoning pilgrimage, to Syria. He was absent from England during the life of queen Anne, and happy would it have been for his brother if he had never returned.

Anne of Bohemia, unlike Isabella of France, who was always at war with her husband's favourites and friends, made it a rule of life to love all that the king loved, and to consider a sedulous compliance with his will as her first duty. In one instance alone did this pliancy of temper lead her into the violation of justice; this was in the case of the repudiation of the countess of Oxford.

"There were great murmurings against the duke of Ireland," says Froissart; "but what injured him most was his conduct to his duchess, the lady Philippa, daughter of the lord de Courcy, a handsome and noble lady. For the duke was greatly enamoured with one of the queen's damsels, called the landgravine.<sup>2</sup> She was a tolerably handsome, pleasant lady, whom queen Anne had brought with her from Bohemia. The duke of Ireland loved her with such ardour, that he was desirous of making her, if possible, his duchess by marriage. All the good people of England were much shocked at this, for his lawful wife was granddaughter to the gallant king Edward and the excellent queen Philippa, being the daughter of the princess Isabella. Her uncles, the dukes of Gloucester and York, were very wroth at this insult."

The first and last error of Anne of Bohemia was the participation in this disgraceful transaction, by which she was degraded in the eyes of subjects who had warmly admired her meek virtues. The offensive part taken by the queen in this transaction was, that she actually wrote with her own hand, an urgent letter to pope Urban, persuading him to sanction the divorce of the countess of Oxford, and to authorize the marriage of her faithless lord with the landgravine. Whether the maid of honour were a princess or a peasant, she had no right to appropriate another woman's husband. The queen was scarcely less culpable in aiding and abetting so nefarious a measure, to the infinite injury of herself, and of the consort she so tenderly loved.

There was scarcely an earl in England who was not related to the

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.

<sup>2</sup> Froissart gives this high title to this maid of honour, while the English chroniclers brand her with low birth. The Fædera at once puts an end to these disputes by naming her the *landgravissa* or landgravine of Luxembourg, which shows not only that she was noble, but allied to the imperial family itself. The king gives a safe-conduct to this *landgravissa*, to come to England with all her jewels, chamber furniture, and valuables sent by the empress for the use of his dearest queen, the empress having appointed the *landgravissa*, her daughter's lady of the bedchamber.

royal family; the queen, by the part she took in this disgraceful affair, offended every one allied to the royal house of Plantagenet.<sup>1</sup>

The storm fell in its fury on the head of the unfortunate sir Simon Burley, the same knight whom we have seen make two journeys to Prague, in solemn embassy, regarding the queen's marriage. This unfortunate knight, who was the most accomplished man of his age, had been foredoomed by his persecutors. The earl of Arundel had previously expressed an opinion to king Richard, that sir Simon de Burley deserved death.

"Didst thou not say to me in the time of *thy* parliament, when we were in the bath behind the white-hall, that sir Simon de Burley deserved to be put to death on several accounts? And did not I make answer, 'I know no reason why he should suffer death?' and, yet you and your companions traitorously took his life from him?" Such was the accusation by king Richard, when Arundel stood on his trial, to pay the bitter debt of vengeance that Richard had noted against him, as the cause of his tutor's death.

The death of sir Simon Burley was a bitter sorrow to the queen, perhaps her first sorrow; and as it appears that the expenses of her journey from Germany being left unpaid by the government, during the king's minority, ultimately led to the disgrace of her friend, the queen must have considered herself as the innocent cause of his death.

While the executions of sir Simon Burley and many others of the king's adherents were proceeding in London, Richard and his queen retired to Bristol, and fixed their residence in the castle.

A civil war commenced which terminated in the defeat of the royal troops at Radcot Bridge, near Oxford, by the duke of Gloucester, and young Henry of Bolingbroke. It was the queen's mediation alone that could induce Richard to receive the archbishop of Canterbury, when he came to propose an amnesty between the king and his subjects; two days and nights did Richard remain inflexible, till at last, by the persuasion of Anne, the archbishop was admitted to the royal presence. "Many plans," says Froissart, "were proposed to the king; at last by the good advice of the queen, he restrained his choler, and agreed to accompany the archbishop to London." After the queen returned to London from Bristol, the proceedings of that parliament commenced, which has been justly termed by history, the Merciless. The queen's servants were the principal objects of its vengeance, the tendency to Lollardism in her household being probably the secret motive. It was in vain that the queen of England humbled herself to the very dust, in hopes of saving her faithful friends.

King Richard in an especial manner instanced the undutifulness of the earl of Arundel to the queen,<sup>2</sup> who, he declared, "was three hours on her knees before this earl, pleading with tears for the life of John Calverley, one of her esquires." All the answer she could get was this,

<sup>1</sup> After all, the divorce was not carried into effect, for, in the year 1389, there is a letter of safe-conduct, from king Richard to his dearest cousin Philippa, wife to Robert de Vere.

<sup>2</sup> At the trial of Arundel.

"Pray for yourself and your husband, for that is the best thing you can do, and let this request alone;" and all the importunities used could not save Calverley's life.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the duke of Gloucester and his colleagues established a reign of terror, making it penal for any person to testify fidelity to the king or queen, or to receive their confidence.

The duke of Ireland fled to the Low Countries, from whence he never returned during his life. It is worthy of remark, that the niece<sup>2</sup> of his ill-treated wife, for whose divorce Anne of Bohemia had intrigued with pope Urban, married the great and powerful emperor Sigismund, own brother to that queen.

The intermediate time, from the autumn of 1387 to the spring of 1389, was spent by the young king and queen in a species of restraint. Eltham and Shene were the favourite residences of Richard and Anne, and in these palaces they chiefly sojourned at this time. The favourite summer palace of Anne was named, from the lovely landscape around it, Shene: tradition says that Edward the Confessor, delighting in the fair scenery, called it by that expressive Saxon word, signifying every thing that is bright and beautiful.

The king had, during this interval, attained his twenty-second year, and his first question, on the meeting of his parliament, was, "How old he was?"

And when they named the years he had attained, he declared that his ancestors were always considered of age much earlier, and that the meanest of his subjects were of age at twenty-one; he therefore determined to shake off the fetters that controlled him. This scene was followed by a sort of re-coronation in St. Stephen's chapel, where the nobility renewed their oaths to him; and it was particularly observed that he kissed those with affection whom he considered as his adherents, and scowled on those who had been the leaders in the late insurrections.

The king always appears to have been exceedingly attached to his uncle, the duke of Lancaster, but he had a strong wish to rid himself of his turbulent and popular cousin, Henry, the eldest son of that duke, who was born the same year as himself, and from infancy was his rival. On one occasion Henry had threatened the life of the king in the presence of the queen.

"Thrice have I saved his life!" exclaimed king Richard. "Once my dear uncle Lancaster (on whom God have mercy) would have slain him for his treason and villany, and then, O God of Paradise! all night did I ride to preserve him from death. Once also he drew his sword on me, in the chamber of queen Anne."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> State Trials, vol. i.

<sup>2</sup> Barbara, the daughter of her sister, by the count de Cilley. See Brooke's Succession of Kings, and Betham's Genealogies.

<sup>3</sup> This fray must have taken place in the year 1390, since Henry of Bolingbroke withdrew at that period from England, in order to carry arms against some unconverted tribes, on the borders of Lithuania, with whom the Teutonic knights were waging a crusade warfare. (Speed.) Count Valerian Krasinski declares that the plain where the English prince encamped in Lithuania is still pointed out by the peasants.

King Richard soon after bestowed on the duke of Lancaster the sovereignty of Aquitaine, probably with the design of keeping the son of that prince at a distance from England. The queen held a grand festival on this occasion. Part of the high ceremonial consisted in the queen's presentation of the duchess of Lancaster with the gold circlet she was to wear as duchess of Aquitaine, while Richard invested his uncle with the ducal coronet; but the investiture was useless, for the people of Aquitaine refused to be separated from the dominion of England.

The king's full assumption of the royal authority was celebrated with a splendid tournament, over which queen Anne presided, as the sovereign lady, to bestow the prize—a rich jewelled clasp—to the best tenant of the lists, and a rich crown of gold to the best of the opponents. Sixty of her ladies, mounted on beautiful palfreys, each led a knight, by a silver chain, to the tilting ground at Smithfield, through the streets of London, by the sound of trumpets, attended by numerous minstrels. In this order they passed before queen Anne, who was already arrived with her ladies, and placed in open chambers,<sup>1</sup> richly decorated. The queen retired, at dusk, to the bishop of London's palace at St. Paul's, where she held a grand banquet, with dancing both before and after supper. During the whole of the tournament the queen lodged at the palace of the bishop of London.<sup>2</sup>

The queen's good offices as a mediator were required in the year 1392, to compose a serious difference between Richard II. and the city of London. Richard had asked a loan of a thousand pounds from the citizens, which they peremptorily refused. An Italian merchant offered the king the sum required, upon which the citizens raised a tumult, and tore the unfortunate loan-lender to pieces. This outrage being followed by a riot, attended with bloodshed, Richard declared "that as the city did not keep his peace, he should resume her charters," and actually removed the courts of law to York. In distress, the city applied to queen Anne to mediate for them. Fortunately, Richard had no other favourite at that time than his peace-loving queen, "who was," say the ancient historians, "very precious to the nation, being continually doing some good to the people; and she deserved a much larger dower than the sum settled on her, which only amounted to four thousand five hundred pounds per annum."

The manner in which queen Anne pacified Richard, is preserved in a Latin chronicle poem, written by Richard Maydeston, an eye-witness of the scene;<sup>3</sup> he was a priest attached to the court, and in favour with Richard and the queen.

Through the private intercession of the queen, the king consented to pass through the city, on his way from Shene to Westminster Palace, on the 29th of August.

<sup>1</sup> They were temporary stands erected at Smithfield, in the same manner as on racing courses in the present times. <sup>2</sup> See col. Johnes' Notes to Froissart.

<sup>3</sup> Lately published by the Camden Society. Maydeston's narrative is fully confirmed by a letter from Richard, in the *Fœdera*, wherein he declares, "he was reconciled to the citizens through the mediation of his dear wife the queen."

"When they arrived at Southwark the queen assumed her crown, which she wore during the whole procession through London: it was blazing with various gems of the choicest kinds; her dress was likewise studded with precious stones, and she wore a rich carcanet about her neck; she appeared—according to the taste of Maydeston—'fairest among the fair,' and from the benign humility of her gracious countenance, the anxious citizens gathered hopes that she would succeed in pacifying the king. During the entry of the royal pair into the city, they rode at some distance from each other. At the first bridge-tower the king and queen were met by the lord mayor and other authorities, followed by a vast concourse of men, women, and children, every artificer bearing some symbol of his craft. Before the Southwark-bridge gate the king was presented with a pair of fair white steeds, trapped with gold cloth, figured with red and white, and hung full of silver bells. 'Steeds such as Cæsar might have been pleased to yoke to his car.'"

Queen Anne then arrived with her train, when the lord mayor Venner presented her with a small white palfrey, exquisitely trained, for her own riding. The lord mayor commenced a long speech with these words:

"O generous offspring of imperial blood, whom God hath destined worthily to sway the sceptre as consort of our king!"

He then proceeds to hint that mercy and not rigour best became the queenly station, and that gentle ladies had great influence with their loving lords; then entering into the merits of the palfrey, he commended its beauty, its docility, and the convenience of its ambling paces, and the magnificence of its purple housings. After the animal had been graciously accepted by the queen, she passed over the bridge and came to the bridge-portal on the city side: but some of her maids of honour, who were following her, in two wagons, or charrettes,<sup>1</sup> were not quite so fortunate in their progress over the bridge.

Old London Bridge was, in the fourteenth century, and for some ages after, no such easy defile for a large influx of people to pass through: though not then encroached upon by houses and shops, it was encumbered by fortifications and barricades, which guarded the draw-bridge towers in the centre, and the bridge-gate towers at each end. In this instance the multitudes pouring out of the city, to get a view of the queen and her train, meeting the crowds following the royal procession, the throngs pressed on each other so tumultuously, that one of the charrettes containing the queen's ladies was overturned—lady rolled upon lady, all being sadly discomposed in the upset; and, what was worse, nothing could restrain the laughter of the rude, plebeian artificers; at last the equipage was righted, the discomfited damsels replaced, and their charrette resumed its place in the procession. But such a reverse

<sup>1</sup> These conveyances were neither more nor less than benched wagons, which were kept for the accommodation of the queen's maids of honour; the charrettes were very gaily ornamented with red paint, and lined with scarlet cloth throughout. They are described in the household books of royalty, very minutely; they must certainly have been more jolting and uneasy than carriers' carts.



of horned caps did not happen without serious inconveniences to the wearers, as Maydeston very minutely particularizes.

As the king and queen passed through the city, the principal thoroughfares were hung with gold cloth and silver tissue, and tapestry of silk and gold. When they approached the conduit at Cheapside, red and white wine played from the spouts of a tower erected against it, the royal pair were served "with rosy wine smiling in golden cups," and an angel flew down in a cloud, and presented to the king, and then to the queen, rich gold circlets worth several hundred pounds. Another conduit of wine played at St. Paul's eastern gate, where was stationed a band of antique musical instruments, whose names alone will astound modern musical ears. There were persons playing on tympanies, monochords, cymbals, psalteries, and lyres; zambucas, citherns, situlas, horns, and viols. Our learned Latinist dwells with much unction on the symphonous chorus produced by these instruments, which, he says, "wrap all hearers in a kind of stupor." No wonder!

At the monastery of St. Paul's the king and queen alighted from their steeds, and passed through the cathedral on foot, in order to pay their offerings at the holy sepulchre of St. Erkenwald. At the western gate they remounted their horses, and proceeded to the Ludgate. There, just above the river bridge,—which river, we beg to remind our readers, was that delicious stream, now called Fleet-ditch,—was perched "a celestial band of spirits, who saluted the royal personages, as they passed the Flete-bridge, with enchanting singing, and sweet psalmody, making, withal, a pleasant fume by swinging incense-pots; they likewise scattered fragrant flowers on the king and queen as they severally passed the bridge."

And if the odours of that civic stream, the Flete at that time, by any means rivalled those which pertain to it at present, every one must own that a fumigation was appointed there with great judgment.

At the Temple barrier, above the gate, was the representation of a desert, inhabited by all manner of animals, mixed with reptiles and monstrous worms, or, at least, by their resemblances; in the background was a forest; amidst the concourse of beasts, was seated the holy Baptist John,<sup>1</sup> pointing with his finger to an *Agnus Dei*. After the king had halted to view this scene, his attention was struck by the figure of St. John, for whom he had a peculiar devotion, when an angel descended from above the wilderness, bearing in his hands a splendid gift, which was a tablet, studded with gems, "fit for any altar," with the crucifixion embossed thereon. The king took it in his hand and said, "Peace to this city; for the sake of Christ, his mother, and my patron St. John, I forgive every offence."

Then the king continued his progress towards his palace, and the queen arrived opposite to the desert and St. John, when lord mayor Venner presented her with another tablet, likewise representing the crucifixion. He commenced his speech with these words:—

"Illustrious daughter of imperial parents, Anne—a name in Hebrew

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<sup>1</sup> The Temple was then in possession of the Hospitallers of St. John.

signifying grace, and which was borne by her who was the mother of the mother of Christ,—mindful of your race and name, intercede for us to the king; and, as often as you see this tablet think of our city, and speak in our favour.”

Upon which the queen graciously accepted the dutiful offering of the city, saying, with the emphatic brevity of a good wife who knew her influence, “Leave all to me.”

By this time the king had arrived at his palace of Westminster, the great hall of which was ornamented with hangings more splendid than the pen can describe. Richard’s throne was prepared upon the King’s Bench, which royal tribunal he ascended, sceptre in hand, and sat in great majesty, when the queen and the rest of the procession entered the hall.

The queen was followed by her maiden train. When she approached the king, she knelt down at his feet, and so did all her ladies. The king hastened to raise her, asking,

“What would Anna?—declare, and your request shall be granted.”

The queen’s answer is perhaps a fair specimen of the way in which she obtained her empire over the weak but affectionate mind of Richard; more honeyed words than the following, female blandishment could scarcely devise.

“Sweet,” she replied, “my king, my spouse, my light, my life! Sweet love, without whose life mine would be but death! Be pleased to govern your citizens as a gracious lord. Consider, even to-day, how munificent their treatment! What worship, what honour, what splendid public duty, have they at great cost paid to thee, revered king! Like us, they are but mortal, and liable to frailty. Far from thy memory, my king, my sweet love, be their offences, and for their pardon I supplicate, kneeling thus lowly on the ground.”

Then, after some mention of Brutus and Arthur, ancient kings of Britain,—which no doubt are interpolated flourishes of good Master Maydeston, the queen concludes her supplication, by requesting “that the king would please to restore, to these worthy and penitent plebeians, their ancient charters and liberties.”

“Be satisfied, dearest wife,” the king answered, “loth should we be to deny thee any reasonable request of thine. Meantime ascend, and sit beside me on my throne, while I speak a few words to my people.”

He seated the gentle queen beside him on the throne. The king then spoke, and all listened in silence, both high and low. He addressed the lord mayor:—

“I will restore to you my royal favour as in former days, for I duly prize the expense which you have incurred, the presents you have made me, and the prayers of the queen. Do you henceforth avoid offence to your sovereign, and disrespect to his nobles. Preserve the ancient faith; despise the new doctrines unknown to your fathers; defend the catholic church, the whole church, for there is no order of men in it, that is not dedicated to the worship of God. Take back the key and sword; keep

my peace in your city, rule its inhabitants as formerly, and be among them my representative."<sup>1</sup>

No further differences with the king disturbed the country, during the life of Anne of Bohemia. It is probable that if the existence of this beloved queen had been spared, the calamities and crimes of Richard's future years would have been averted, by her mild advice.

Yet the king's extravagant generosity nothing could repress; the profusion of the royal household is severely commented upon by Walsingham and Knighton. Still, their strictures seem invidious; nothing but partisan malice could blame such hospitality as the following in a time of famine. "Though a terrible series of plagues and famine afflicted England, the king retrenched none of his diversions or expenses. He entertained every day six thousand persons, most of them were *indigent* poor. He valued himself on surpassing in magnificence all the sovereigns in Europe, as if he possessed an inexhaustible treasure; in his kitchen alone, three hundred persons were employed; and the queen had a like number to attend upon her service."<sup>2</sup>

While Richard was preparing for a campaign in Ireland, which country had revolted from his authority, his departure was delayed by a terrible bereavement. This was the loss of his beloved partner. It is supposed she died of the pestilence that was then raging throughout Europe, as her decease was heralded by an illness of but a few hours. Froissart says, speaking of the occurrences in England, June, 1394—"At this period the lady Anne, queen of England, fell sick, to the infinite distress of king Richard and all her household. Her disorder increased so rapidly, that she departed this life at the feast of Whitsuntide, 1394. The king and all who loved her were greatly afflicted at her death. King Richard was inconsolable for her loss, as they mutually loved each other, having been married young. This queen left no issue, for she never bore a child."

Anne of Bohemia died at her favourite palace of Shene; the king was with her when she expired. He had never given her a rival; she appears to have possessed his whole heart, which was rent by the most acute sorrow at the sudden loss of his faithful partner, who was, in fact, his only friend. In the frenzy of his grief, Richard imprecated the bitterest curses on the place of her death, and, unable to bear the sight of the place where he had passed his only happy hours, with this beloved and virtuous queen, he ordered the palace of Shene to be levelled with the ground.<sup>3</sup>

The deep tone of Richard's grief is apparent even in the summons sent by him to the English peers, requiring their attendance, to do honour to the magnificent obsequies he had prepared for his lost consort. His letters on this occasion are in existence, and are addressed to each of his barons in this style:

<sup>1</sup> This reconciliation cost the city 10,000*l*. From some allusions in the king's speech, there is reason to suppose that the riot had been laid on the *Wickliffites*.

<sup>2</sup> Walsingham.

<sup>3</sup> The apartments where the queen died were actually dismantled, but Henry V. restored them.

**"VERY DEAR AND FAITHFUL COUSIN,<sup>1</sup>—**

"Inasmuch as our beloved companion, the queen, (whom God has hence commanded,) will be buried at Westminster, on Monday the third of August next, we earnestly entreat that you (setting aside all excuses) will repair to our city of London, the Wednesday previous to the same day, bringing with you our very dear kinswoman, your consort, at the same time.

"We desire that you will, the preceding day, accompany the corpse of our dear consort from our manor of Shene to Westminster; and for this we trust we may rely on you, as you desire our honour, and that of our kingdom. Given under our privy seal at Westminster, the 10th day of June, 1394."

We gather from this document, that Anne's body was brought from Shene in grand procession, the Wednesday before the 3d of August, attended by all the nobility of England, male and female; likewise by the citizens and authorities of London,<sup>2</sup> all clothed in black, with black hoods; and on the 3d of August the queen was interred.

"Abundance of wax was sent for from Flanders, for flambeaux and torches; and the illumination was so great that nothing was seen like it before, not even at the burial of the good queen Philippa; the king would have it so, because she was daughter of the emperor of Rome and Germany."<sup>3</sup>

The most memorable and interesting circumstance at the burial of Anne of Bohemia is the fact, that Thomas Arundel, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, who preached her funeral sermon, in the course of it greatly commended the queen for reading the holy Scriptures in the vulgar tongue.<sup>4</sup>

Richard's grief was as long enduring as it was acute. One year elapsed before he had devised the species of monument he thought worthy the memory of his beloved Anne, yet his expressions of tenderness regarding her pervaded his covenant with the London artificers employed to erect this tomb. He took, withal, the extraordinary step of having his own monumental statue made to repose by that of the queen, with the hands of the effigies clasped in each other.

The tomb of Anne was commenced in 1395; the indentures descriptive of its form are to be found in the *Fædera*; the marble part of the

<sup>1</sup> The style of this circular will prove how much modern historians are mistaken who declare, that king Henry IV. first adopted that form of royal address, which terms all earls the king's cousins; yet the authority is no less than that of Blackstone. It does not appear that this circular was confined to earls.

<sup>2</sup> The *Fædera* contains a circular from the king to the citizens, nearly similar to the above.

<sup>3</sup> Froissart.

<sup>4</sup> Rapin, vol. i. 701. There is a great contradiction between Rapin and Fox, when alluding to this funeral sermon. Fox, in his dedication of the Anglo-Saxon Gospels to queen Elizabeth, in 1571, uses these words:—"Thomas Arundel, archbishop, at the funeral oration of queen Anne, in 1394, did avouch, as Polydore Vergil saith, that she had the gospels with divers expositors, which she sent unto him to be verified and examined." This is the direct contrary to Rapin's assertion, yet the whole current of events in Richard II.'s reign strongly supports the assertion of the early reformers that Anne of Bohemia was favourably inclined to them. Certain it is that her brother, king Wincseslaus of Bohemia (though no great honour to the cause), encouraged the Hussites in her native country.

monument was consigned to the care of Stephen Loat, citizen and mason of London, and Henry Yevele, his partner.

In the document alluded to above occur these remarkable words. "And also inscriptions are to be graven about the tomb, such as will be delivered proper for it." The actual inscription is in Latin; the sentiments are tender and elegant, and the words probably composed by the king himself, as it enters into the personal and mental qualifications of Anne, like one who knew and loved her. The Latin commences,

"Sub petra lata mana Anna jacet tumulata," &c.

The following is a literal translation :<sup>1</sup>

"Under this stone lies Anna, here entombed.  
Wedded in this world's life to the second Richard.  
To Christ were her meek virtues devoted,  
His poor she freely fed from her treasures;  
Strife she assuaged, and swelling feuds appeased.  
Beauteous her form, her face surpassing fair.  
On July's seventh day, thirteen hundred ninety-four,  
All comfort was bereft, for through irremediable sickness  
She passed away into eternal joys."

Richard departed for Ireland soon after the burial of Anne, but his heart was still bleeding for the loss of his queen; and though her want of progeny was one of the principal causes of the troubles of his reign, he mourned for her with the utmost constancy of affection. Frequently, when he was in his council-chamber at Dublin, if anything accidentally recalled her to his thoughts, he would burst into tears, rise, and suddenly leave the room.<sup>2</sup>

"The year of her death," says Walsingham, "was notable for splendid funerals. Constance, duchess of Lancaster, a lady of great innocency of life, died then; and her daughter-in-law, the co-heiress of Hereford, wife of Henry of Bolingbroke, and mother of his children, died in the bloom of life. She was followed to the tomb by Isabel, duchess of York, second daughter of Pedro the Cruel, a lady noted for her over-fineness and delicacy, yet at her death showing much penitence for her pestilent vanities.<sup>3</sup> But the grief for all these deaths by no means equalled that of the king for his own queen Anne, whom he loved even to madness."

The people of England likewise deeply regretted this benignant and peace-loving queen, and long hallowed her memory by the simple yet expressive appellation of "Good Queen Anne."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There likewise hung a tablet in Latin, probably belonging to the hearse. Skelton has translated it in his usual vulgar jingle. As the more interesting epitaph is given, the tablet verses are omitted, but they may be seen in Stow.

<sup>2</sup> Burton's Irish History.

<sup>3</sup> Heiress of Pedro the Cruel.

<sup>4</sup> A letter written by Anne of Bohemia is preserved in the archives of Queen's College, Oxford, in favour of learning. We have received this intimation from Mr. Halliwell, whose learned and intelligent labours in the Camden Society are well known.

# LIVES

OF THE

## QUEENS OF ENGLAND,

FROM

THE NORMAN CONQUEST;

WITH

ANECDOTES OF THEIR COURTS,

NOW FIRST PUBLISHED FROM

OFFICIAL RECORDS AND OTHER AUTHENTIC DOCUMENTS,  
PRIVATE AS WELL AS PUBLIC.

NEW EDITION, WITH CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS.

BY

AGNES STRICKLAND.

The treasures of antiquity laid up  
In old historic rolls, I opened.

BEAUMONT.

VOL. III. ✓

PHILADELPHIA:  
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1852.

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OF THE

## THIRD VOLUME.

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## PREFACE.

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MANY apologies are due to an indulgent public for the tardy appearance of the third and concluding volume of the First Series of the "Lives of the Queens of England."

The cause of this delay will be best explained by a letter which I had the honour of receiving from his Excellency Monsieur Guizot in May last, and which I avail myself of his courteous permission to publish, as affording not only a cogent reason for the postponement of the present volume, but a testimonial of those preceding it, of which I can scarcely be too proud.

*"Londres, Mai 17, 1840.*

"MADEMOISELLE,

"Je réponds bien tard à la bonté que vous m'avez témoignée en m'envoyant vos 'Vies des Reines d'Angleterre.' Je n'ai pas voulu vous en parler sans les avoir lues, et jusqu'ici j'ai eu bien peu de tems disponible. J'ai lu enfin, Mademoiselle, et avec un bien vif plaisir. C'est un ouvrage charmant, plein d'un intérêt sérieux et doux. Vous avez étudié les sources, et vous savez présenter les faits simplement, bien que sans sécheresse. Ma lecture finie, j'ai envoyé votre livre à mes filles, qui sont encore à Paris, et qui le lisent à leur tour avec le vif amusement de leur âge.

"Agréez, je vous prie, Mademoiselle, tous mes remerciemens, et l'hommage de mon respect.

"Guizot.

"P.S.—J'ai écrit à Paris pour demander s'y existent quelques documens particuliers et inédits sur l'histoire de Marguerite d'Anjou. Si on m'en envoie j'aurai l'honneur de vous les transmettre."

I had been so materially indebted, in the first and second volumes of the *Lives of the Queens of England*, to the invaluable documents which the research of this illustrious statesman-historian has been the means of rescuing from oblivion, that I was naturally anxious to avail myself of his friendly assistance, in writing the memoir of Margaret of Anjou; and as Monsieur Michelet, the President of the Historical Society at Paris, M. Lefrevoit, M. Abel Hugo, Mademoiselle Fontaine, and several learned friends besides, were most kindly engaged in exploring the treasures of the Royal Archives of France, and the MS. collections of Normandy and Lorraine, with reference to the same object, I considered the delay of a few weeks, in the publication of the present volume, as a matter of duty.

The result will, I trust, sufficiently justify me for having ventured to depart from my original plan, of presenting these volumes in monthly succession.

I have now to acknowledge my obligations to those courteous and learned gentlemen who have in various ways facilitated me, in the arduous, yet delightful, task of restoring to their proper positions in the *tableau* of history, the almost shadowy succession of our ancient Queens of England. Among those to whom I am peculiarly indebted, I have the honour of naming that munificent collector, sir Thomas Phillips, who has kindly permitted me to enrich the present volume with interesting and precious extracts, from the curious manuscript wardrobe accounts of Joanna of Navarre, the queen of Henry IV.; Henry Howard, esq., of Corby, and his accomplished son, Philip H. Howard, esq., M.P. for Carlisle, both of whom have afforded me important informa-

tion connected with the Queens of England, from authentic sources, accessible only through the influence of private friendship. My grateful thanks are offered to sir Harris Nicolas; J. Bruce, esq.; J. O. Halliwell, esq.; the Rev. J. Hunter; G. F. Beltz, esq., Lancaster Herald; C. G. Young, esq., York Herald; Mr. T. Saunders, the restorer of the Ladye Chapel, in St. Saviour's, Southwark; and most especially to that great historian, John Lingard, D.D., and to the Rev. George C. Tomlinson, editor of the Breknoke Computus.

The First Series of the Lives of the Queens of England, containing the Anglo-Norman and Plantagenet queens, is now completed. The present volume presents the personal history of six queens—namely, Isabella of Valois, the second Queen of Richard II., whose life has never before been written; Joanna of Navarre; Katherine of Valois; Margaret of Anjou; Elizabeth Woodville; and Anne Neville. These princesses were all more or less involved in the changeful events of that stormy era of our annals, which is thus finely described by the masterly pen of Guizot:—

“The history of England in the fifteenth century consists of two great epochs: the French wars without, those of the roses within—the wars abroad, and the wars at home. Scarcely was the foreign war terminated when the civil war commenced, and was long and fatally continued while the houses of York and Lancaster contested the throne. When these sanguinary disputes were ended, the high English aristocracy found themselves ruined, decimated, and deprived of the power they had formerly exercised. The associated barons could no longer control the throne when it was ascended by the Tudors; and with Henry VII., in 1485, the era of political concentration and the triumph of royalty commenced.”

The sovereign and the great body of the people from that time made common cause, to prevent the re-establishment of an oligarchy, which had been found equally inimical to the rights of the Commons and to the dignity of the Crown. I have traced the history and influence of the queens of England, from the establishment of the feudal system to its close; commencing

with the first Anglo-Norman queen, Matilda, the wife of William the Conqueror, and concluding with Anne of Warwick, the last Plantagenet queen, herself the sad representative of the mightiest of all the aristocratic dictators of the fifteenth century, the earl of Warwick, surnamed the King-maker.

The Second Series of the Lives of the Queens of England will commence with the Tudor queen-consorts, and will contain, in chronological succession, the queen-regnants, as well as the queen-consorts, from that era.

# ISABELLA OF VALOIS,

SURNAMED THE LITTLE QUEEN,

SECOND QUEEN OF RICHARD II.

---

An infant queen-consort—Isabella, daughter to Charles VI.—English ambassadors—Isabella's dialogue with them—She is betrothed to Richard II.—Married at Calais—Embarks—Enters London—Called the Little Queen—Educated at Windsor—King's visits—Her childish love for him—Conspiracy to imprison the king and queen—Young queen's tournament—Richard's farewell visit—The young queen's growth and beauty—Extravagance of her governess—Change in her household—Parting with Richard—Queen's passionate grief—Invasion—Queen sent to Wallingford—King's return—His poetical address to the queen—She is seized by Bolingbroke—Richard in the Tower—Dejection—Fierce burst of passion—Demands restoration of the queen—Deposed—Queen at Sunning Hill—Joins the revolt against Henry IV.—Richard's murder—Widowhood of queen Isabella—Offer of Henry, Prince of Wales—Refusal—Queen deprived of jewels and dower—Returns to France—Tender farewell to the English—Restoration to her family—Renewed offers from Henry, Prince of Wales—Her aversion—Betrothed to the heir of Orleans—Murder of her father-in-law—Mournful procession of Isabella—Birth of Isabella's infant—Her death—Burial at Blois—Grief of her husband—Elegies written by him—Discovery of Isabella's corpse—Re-interment.

THE union of Isabella of Valois with Richard II. presented an anomaly to the people of England unprecedented in their annals. They saw with astonishment an infant, not nine summers old, sharing the throne as the chosen queen-consort of a monarch who had reached his thirtieth year.

Richard, whose principal error was attention to his own private feelings in preference to the public good, considered, that by the time this little princess grew up, the lapse of years would have mellowed his grief for the loved and lost Anne of Bohemia; he could not divorce his heart from the memory of his late queen sufficiently to give her a successor nearer his own age.

Isabella of Valois was the daughter of Charles VI. of France and Isabeau of Bavaria, that queen of France afterwards so notorious for her wickedness; but at the time of the marriage of Richard II. with her little daughter, Queen Isabeau was only distinguished for great beauty and luxurious taste in dress and festivals.

Charles VI. had already experienced two or three agonising attacks of inflammation on the brain, which had yielded, however, to medical skill; and he was at this time a magnificent, prosperous, and popular

sovereign. Isabella, the eldest child of this royal pair, first saw the light in the Louvre palace, at Paris, 1387, November 9th. She was the fairest of a numerous and lovely family, the females of which were remarkable for the beauty lavished on them by the hand of nature. The queen of France was the daughter of a German prince and an Italian princess; she was renowned for the splendour of her large dark eyes, and the clearness and brightness of her complexion, charms which were transmitted to her daughters in no common degree. Isabella had three brothers, who were successively dauphins; and four sisters—Joanna, duchess of Brittany; Marie, a nun; Michelle, the first duchess of Philip the Good of Burgundy; and Katherine the Fair, the queen of Henry V. of England. These royal ladies inherited their father's goodness without his malady, and their mother's beauty without her vices. The princess Isabella was precocious in intellect and stature, and was every way worthy of fulfilling a queenly destiny. Unlike her sisters, Michelle and Katherine, who were cruelly neglected in their infant years, she was the darling of her parents and of the court of France. Isabella is no mute on the biographical page; the words she uttered have been chronicled; and though so young, both as the wife and widow of an English king, research will show that her actions were of some historical importance. The life of Richard's last consort is a curious portion of the biography of our queens of England, as an instance of a girl of tender age placed in unusual circumstances.

"The king," says sir John de Grailly, a courtly informant of Froissart, "is advised to marry again, and has had researches made every where, but in vain, for a suitable lady. He has been told that the king of Navarre has sisters and daughters, but he will not hear of them. The duke of Gloucester has, likewise, a grown-up girl, who is marriageable, and well pleased would he be if his royal nephew would choose her; but the king says 'she is too nearly related, being his cousin-german.' King Richard's thoughts are so bent on the eldest daughter of the king of France, he will not hear of any other; it causes great wonder in this country that he should be so eager to marry the daughter of his adversary, and he is not the better beloved for it. King Richard has been told 'that the lady was by far too young, and that even in five or six years she would not be the proper age for a wife.' He replied pleasantly, 'that every day would remedy the deficiency of age, and her youth was one of his reasons for preferring her, because he should educate her and bring her up to his own mind, and to the manners and customs of the English; and that, as for himself, he was young enough to wait for her.'"

Froissart was staying at Eltham palace when the parliament met to debate the marriage in the beautiful gothic hall.<sup>1</sup> While they were walking on the terrace, sir Richard Sturry, one of the king's household, gave him this information:—

"The king made the archbishop of Canterbury speak of the business

<sup>1</sup> The refined taste of her royal highness the princess Sophia Matilda led to the recent restoration of this noble relic.

of his marriage. In the debate it was agreed, that the archbishop of Dublin, the earl of Rutland, and the earl marshal, with twenty knights and forty squires of honour, should wait on the king of France, and propose a treaty of marriage between him and the princess Isabella.<sup>1</sup>

"When the English embassy arrived at Paris, they were lodged near the Croix du Tiroir, and their attendants and horses, to the number of five hundred, in the adjoining streets. The king of France resided at the Louvre, and the queen and her children at the Hôtel de St. Pol, on the banks of the Seine; and to please the English lords, their request was granted to visit the queen and her family, and especially the little princess, whom they were soliciting to be bestowed as the wife of their king, as they were impatient to behold her. This had been at first refused, for the French council excused themselves by observing, 'That she was as yet but eight years; how could any one know how so young a child would conduct herself at such an interview?'" She had, however, been carefully educated, as she proved when the English nobles waited upon her; for when the earl marshal dropped upon his knee, saying,—

"Madam, if it please God, you shall be our lady and queen,"

"She replied instantly, and without any one prompting her, 'Sir, if it please God and my lord and father, that I be queen of England, I shall be well pleased thereat, for I have been told I shall then be a great lady.'

"She made the earl marshal rise, and, taking him by the hand, led him to queen Isabeau her mother, who was much pleased at her answer, as were all who heard it. The appearance and manners of this young princess were very agreeable to the English ambassadors, and they thought among themselves she would be a lady of high honour and worth."<sup>2</sup>

Just before the young Isabella arrived in England, the duke of Lancaster thought fit to give his princely hand to Catherine Rouet, who had

<sup>1</sup> The Sunday after the departure of the embassy, Richard II. was at leisure to receive the presentation copy of the poesies prepared for him by sir John Froissart. "I presented it to him in his chamber, for I had it with me, and laid it on his bed." From this passage it would appear that the king received him before he had risen. "He took it, and looked into it with much pleasure. He ought to have been pleased, for it was handsomely written and illuminated, and bound in crimson velvet, with ten silver gilt studs, and roses of the same in the middle, with two large clasps of silver gilt, richly worked with roses in the centre. The king asked me 'of what the book treated?' I replied, 'Of love.' He was pleased with the answer, and dipped into several places, reading parts aloud remarkably well, for he read and spoke French in perfection. He then gave it to one of his knights, sir Richard Credon, to carry it to his oratory, and made me many acknowledgments for it." This knight was probably the author of "*Credon's Metrical Chronicle*." The king did not confine his gratitude to empty thanks, for we find he afterwards presented the minstrel-historian with a fine chased silver goblet, containing one hundred nobles, a benefaction which, as Froissart adds, was of infinite use to him. The whole of this scene is a precious relic of the domestic history of English royalty, and carries the reader back four centuries, as if it were but yesterday.

<sup>2</sup> Froissart

been governess to his daughters, and was already mother to those sons of the duke so celebrated in English history as the Beauforts. Serious were the feuds this mis-alliance raised in the royal family. When the marriage of the duke of Lancaster was announced to the ladies of royal descent in England, such as the duchess of Gloucester and the countess of Arundel, who was a Mortimer of the line of Clarence, they were greatly shocked, and said, "The duke had sadly disgraced himself by marrying a woman of light character, since she would take rank as second lady in the kingdom, and the young queen would be dishonourably accompanied by her; but, for their parts, they would leave her to do the honours of the court alone, for they would never enter any place where she was. They themselves would be disgraced if they permitted such a base-born duchess, who had been mistress to the duke, both before and after his marriage with the princess Constance, to take precedence of them, and their hearts would burst with grief were it to happen. Those who were the most outrageous on the subject were the duke and duchess of Gloucester."<sup>1</sup> Thus was the court of king Richard in a state of ferment, with the discontents of the princesses of the house of Plantagenet, just at the time when he required them to assemble for the purpose of receiving his infant bride. While these ladies were settling their points of precedency, the princess Isabella was espoused in Paris by the earl marshal, as proxy for his royal master. "She was from that time," says Froissart, "styled the queen of England. And I was at the time told it was pretty to see her, young as she was, practising how to act the queen."

About this time the king of France sent to England the count St. Pol, who had married Richard's half-sister, Maud Holland, surnamed the Fair. King Richard promised his brother-in-law that he would come to Calais, and have an interview with the king of France, when his bride was to be delivered to him; and if a peace could not be agreed upon, a truce for thirty or forty years was to be established. The duke and duchess of Gloucester, with their children, were asked by the king to be of the party, as were the dukes and duchesses of York and Lancaster. This last lady, despite of all the displeasure of the ladies of the blood royal against her, was staying with the king and her lord at Eltham, and had already been invited to the king's marriage.

With this royal company king Richard crossed the sea to Calais, while the king of France, his queen, and the young princess, advanced as far as St. Omer: where they remained till the treaty of peace assumed some hopeful form. It was, however, in vain that the French strove to soften the opposition of the duke of Gloucester by flattering attentions and the handsome presents they offered him. He accepted the presents; "but the same rancour remained in his breast, and, in spite of everything, when the peace was mentioned, his answers were as crabbed and severe as ever. It was observed, that he pointed out the rich plate of gold and silver to his friends, observing 'that France was still a very rich country, and that peace ought not yet to be made,' a remark more

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.



worthy of a bandit than a royal guest. The king of England, at last, contrived to discover the means of allaying this bellicose disposition in his uncle; the bribe was enormous, considering the duke's constant exhortations in regard to *reformation* and economy in the government. The king was forced to promise his patriotic uncle fifty thousand nobles on his return home, and to make his only son, Humphrey, earl of Rochester, with a pension of two thousand nobles per annum. After the application of this unconscionable bribe, no impediments remained to the peace and marriage, which were concluded, without the restoration of Calais being insisted on by France.

"On the vigil of the feast of St. Simon and St. Jude, which fell on a Friday,<sup>1</sup> the 27th of October, 1396, the two kings left their lodgings on the point of ten o'clock, and, accompanied by a grand attendance, went to the tents that had been prepared for them. Thence they proceeded on foot to a certain space, which had been fixed on for their meeting, and which was surrounded by four hundred French, and as many English, knights, brilliantly armed, who stood with drawn swords. These knights were so marshalled, that the two kings passed between their ranks, conducted in the following order:—The dukes of Lancaster and Gloucester supported the king of France, while the dukes of Berri and Burgundy, uncles of the French king, conducted king Richard; and thus they advanced slowly through the ranks of the knights; and when the two kings were on the point of meeting, the eight hundred knights fell on their knees and wept for joy"—a unanimity of feeling very remarkable in eight hundred knights. "King Richard and king Charles met bare-headed, and, having saluted, took each other by the hand; when the king of France led the king of England to his tent, which was handsome and richly adorned; the four dukes took each other by the hand, and followed them. The English and French knights remained in their ranks, looking at each other with good humour, and never stirred till the whole ceremony was over.

"When the two kings entered the tent, holding each other by the hand, the dukes of Orleans and Bourbon, who had been left in the tent to welcome the monarchs, cast themselves on their knees before them; the kings stopped and made them rise. The six dukes then assembled in front of the tent, and conversed together, while the kings went into the tent and conferred solus, while the wine and spices were preparing. The duke of Berri served the king of France with the comfit-box, and the duke of Burgundy with the cup of wine. In like manner was the king of England served by the dukes of Lancaster and Gloucester. After the kings had been served, the knights of France and England took the wine and comfits, and served the prelates, dukes, princes, and counts; and, after them, the squires and other officers of the household did the same to all within the tents, until every one had partaken of the wine and spices; during which time the two monarchs conversed freely.

"At 11 o'clock of the Saturday morning, the feast of St. Simon and St. Jude, the king of England, attended by his uncles and nobles, waited

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.

on the king of France in his tent. Dinner-tables were laid out; that for the kings was very handsome, and the sideboard was covered with magnificent plate. The two kings were seated by themselves, the king of France at the top of the table, and the king of England below him, at a good distance from each other. They were served by the dukes of Berri, Burgundy, and Bourbon; the last entertained the two monarchs with many gay remarks, to make them laugh, and those about the royal table, for he had much drollery; and addressing the king of England, said—

“My lord king of England, you ought to make good cheer, for you have had all your wishes gratified. You have a wife, or shall have one, for she will speedily be delivered to you.”

“Bourbonnois,” replied the king of France, “we wish our daughter were as old as our cousin of St. Pol,<sup>1</sup> though we were to double her dower, for then she would love our son of England much more.”

The king of England, who understood French well, noticed these words, and, immediately bowing to the king of France, replied,—

“Good father-in-law, the age of our wife pleases us right well. We pay not great attention respecting age, as we value your love; for we shall now be so strongly united, that no king in Christendom can in any way hurt us.”

When dinner was over, which lasted not long, the cloth was removed, the tables carried away, and wine and spices brought. After this the young bride entered the tent, attended by a great number of ladies and damsels. King Charles led her by the hand, and gave her to the king of England, who immediately rose and took his leave. The little queen was placed in a very rich litter, which had been prepared for her; but of all the French ladies who were there, only the lady de Courcy went with her, for there were many of the principal ladies of England in presence, such as the duchesses of Lancaster, of York, of Gloucester, of Ireland,<sup>2</sup> the lady of Namur, the lady Poinings, and many others, who all received queen Isabella with great joy. When the ladies were ready, the king of England and his lords departed with the young princess; and, riding at a good pace, arrived at Calais.

On the Tuesday, which was All-Saints’ day, the king of England was married by the archbishop of Canterbury in the church of St. Nicholas, of Calais, to the lady Isabella of France. Great was the feasting on the occasion; and the heralds and minstrels were so liberally paid, that they were satisfied.

Richard renounced at this marriage (to the indignation of the duke of Gloucester, all claims to the crown of France in right of Isabella or her descendants.<sup>3</sup>

The dukes of Orleans and Bourbon came to Calais to visit the king

<sup>1</sup>This young lady was niece to king Richard, the daughter of Maud Holland, surnamed the Fair. She was probably the beauty of that festival.

<sup>2</sup>The widow of Robert de Vere, mentioned in a former memoir of queen Anne. The lady de Courcy, who accompanied the little queen to England, was the sister of his lady; she was married to the count de Cilly, and was cousin-german to king Richard.

<sup>3</sup>Froissart.

and queen of England two days after the marriage; and on the morrow they went back to St. Omer, where the king and queen of France waited for them. That same Friday morning king Richard and queen Isabella, having heard an early mass and drunk some wine, embarked on board the vessels that had been prepared for them. With a favourable wind, in less than three hours they arrived at Dover. The queen dined at the castle, and slept the next night at Rochester. Passing through Dartford, she arrived at the palace at Eltham, where the nobles and their ladies took leave of the king and queen, and went to their homes.

The young queen's entry into London is thus noted by our chroniclers:—"The young queen Isabella, commonly called the Little (for she was not eight years old), was conveyed from Kennington, near to Lambeth palace, through Southwark, to the Tower of London, Nov. 13th, when such a multitude of persons went out to see her, that on London Bridge nine persons were crushed to death, of whom the prior of Tipster was one, and a matron of Cornhill another."<sup>1</sup> The queen slept one night at the Tower, and the next day was conducted in high pomp to Westminster, where king Richard was waiting in his palace to receive her. This day the Londoners made very rich presents to the queen, which were most graciously accepted.

The portion of Isabella was considerable, consisting of 800,000 francs in gold, to be paid in yearly instalments. She brought with her a wardrobe of great richness. Among her garments was a robe and mantle, unequalled in England, made of red velvet embossed with birds of goldsmiths' work, perched upon branches of pearls and emeralds. The robe was trimmed down the sides with miniver, and had a cape and hood of the same fur, the mantle was lined with ermine. Another robe was of murray-mezereon velvet embroidered with pearl roses. She had coronets, rings, necklaces, and clasps, amounting to 500,000 crowns. Her chamber-hangings were red and white satin, embroidered with figures of vintages and shepherdesses. These jewels were afterwards a matter of political controversy between England and France.

Several authors declare that young Isabella was crowned at Westminster with great magnificence, and there actually exists, in the *Fædera*, a summons for her coronation on Epiphany Sunday, 1397.<sup>2</sup>

Windsor was the chief residence of the royal child, who was called queen-consort of England. Here her education proceeded, under the superintendence of the second daughter of Ingelram de Courcy; and here the king, whose feminine beauty of features and complexion somewhat qualified the disparity of years between a man of thirty and a girl of ten, behaved to his young wife with such winning attention, that she retained a tender remembrance of him long after he was hurried to prison and the grave. His visits occasioned her a cessation from the routine of education; while his gay temper, his musical accomplishments, his

<sup>1</sup> Stow.

<sup>2</sup> "The London Chronicle," p. 80, expressly says, the young queen was crowned January 8th. No particulars are cited of this coronation by any author.

splendour of dress, and softness of manners to females, made her royal husband exceedingly beloved by the young heart of Isabella.

The king had expended prodigious sums on the royal progress to France, and on the marriage and pompous entry of the little queen. These debts had now to be liquidated; and a struggle soon commenced between the king and the popular party concerning the supplies; which ended in the destruction of the duke of Gloucester, and his more honest colleague, the earl of Arundel. A short but fierce despotism was established by Richard, which ultimately led to his deposition.

From the earliest period of her sojourn in England, there was more probability that Isabella would share a prison than a throne. Froissart thus details one of the duke of Gloucester's plots, the object of which was the lifelong incarceration of the harmless little queen.

"He invited the earl of March<sup>1</sup> to come and visit him at Pleshy. There he unbosomed to him all the secrets of his heart, telling him that certain influential persons had elected him as king of England, resolving that king Richard and his queen were to be deposed and forthwith confined in prison, where they were to be maintained with ample provision during their lives; and he besought his nephew 'to give due consideration to this project, which was supported by the earl of Arundel, the earl of Warwick, and many of the prelates and barons of England. The earl of March was thunderstruck at hearing this proposal from his uncle; but, young as he was, he concealed his emotion.

The duke of Gloucester, observing the manner of his nephew, entertained that he would keep his discourse very secret. This Mortimer promised to do, and faithfully kept his word; but honourably resolving to flee from such strong temptation to his integrity and loyalty, he craved leave of king Richard to visit his Irish domains.<sup>2</sup>

"The count de St. Pol had been sent into England by the king of France, in order to see his daughter, and learn how she was going on. The king consulted him and his uncles Lancaster and York on the danger that threatened him and his young consort. 'My good uncles,' said he, 'for the love of God, advise me how to act. I am daily informed that your brother, the duke of Gloucester, is determined to seize and confine me for life in one of my castles, and that the Londoners mean to join him in this iniquity. Their plan is, withal, to separate my queen from me, who is but a child, and shut her up in some other place of confinement. Now, my dear uncles, such cruel acts as these must be prevented.'

"The dukes of Lancaster and York saw that their nephew was in great anguish of heart, and they knew that what he said was strictly true, but they replied to this effect:—

"'Have a little patience, my lord king. We know well that our brother Gloucester has the most passionate and wrong-headed temper of any

<sup>1</sup> It will be remembered that this prince was the heir-presumptive to the throne, the grandson of Lionel of Clarence. A deep obscurity rests on the character and conduct of the princes of the blood of the line of Mortimer in general history.

<sup>2</sup> He was made lord-deputy (viceroy) of Ireland.

man in England. He talks frequently of things he cannot execute, and neither he nor his abettors can break the peace, that has been signed; nor succeed in imprisoning you in any castle. Depend on it, we will never suffer it, nor that you should be separated from the queen.'

"By these words the two dukes calmed king Richard's mind; but to avoid being called on by either party, they left the king's household with their families, and retired to their own castles, the duke of Lancaster taking with him his duchess, who had for some time been the companion of the young queen of England. This desertion was followed by sir Thomas Percy's retirement from court, and surrender of his office of steward of the king's household, avowedly out of apprehension lest he should incur the fate of sir Simon Burley. The king's remaining servants very frequently represented to him the danger of remaining in their offices, in such words as these :

" 'Be assured, dear sir, that as long as the duke of Gloucester lives, there will never be any quiet for your court, nor for England. Besides, he publicly threatens to confine you and your queen. As for the queen, she need not care; she is young, and the beloved child of the king of France; the duke of Gloucester dare not hurt her, but many evils will he bring on you and on England.' These representations sank deeply in the mind of king Richard, and soon after led to his uncle's violent death."

Whatever were the ill intentions of the duke of Gloucester against the king and his offending little queen, the treacherous manner in which king Richard lured his uncle to destruction must revolt all minds; for every tie of hospitality and social intercourse was violated by him. In his first act of wickedness was combined a tissue of crimes. This first step in guilt was followed by the illegal execution of the earl of Arundel. Richard's conscience was not accustomed to cruelty; and after the death of Arundel his sleep was broken and his peace was gone. He used to awake in horror, exclaiming, "that his bed was covered with the blood of the earl."

The hollow peace of the court was soon broken by the quarrel between Henry of Bolingbroke, heir to John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, and the earl marshal, who had been created duke of Norfolk. They mutually accused each other of treasonable conversation against the king. In the true spirit of the age, they appealed to wager of battle, and actually presented themselves in the lists at Coventry, when the king parted them by throwing down his warder, and finished the scene by sentencing Mowbray, duke of Norfolk, to banishment for life, and Henry to exile for seven years.

While Richard's affairs remained in this feverish and unsettled state, the English court was thrown into consternation by the death of the heir-presumptive of the kingdom, Roger Mortimer, who was at that time lord-deputy of Ireland. There was a strong attachment between Richard and his chivalric heir; the king passionately bewailed him, and resolved to make an expedition to Ireland, to quell the rebellion that ensued on the death of his viceroy.

Just before the departure of king Richard for his Irish campaign, he

proclaimed throughout his realm, that a grand tournament would be held at Windsor, by forty knights and forty squires, all clad in green, bearing the young queen's device of a white falcon. They maintained the beauty of the virgin queen of England against all comers. Isabella herself, attended by the noblest ladies and damsels of the land, was present, and dispensed the prizes.

King Richard tarried some hours at Windsor Castle, on his road to the western coast, in order to bid his young queen farewell before he departed for Ireland. Although only eleven years of age, Isabella had grown tall and very lovely; she was rapidly assuming a womanly appearance. The king seemed greatly struck with the improvement in her person, and the progress she had made in her education. He treated her with the utmost deference; and, if the chronicles' of her country are to be believed, he entirely won her young heart at this interview. Yet he had sent to dwell with Isabella witnesses, whose deep grief and mournful habiliments, for the loss of a husband and father, could have told the young queen, even if their lips dared not speak, that the king had stained his hands with kindred blood. According to Froissart, Richard II. had sent the widowed duchess of Gloucester and her daughters to reside with Isabella at Windsor; apparently under some species of restraint.

Before king Richard left Windsor Castle, he discovered that considerable reforms were required in his consort's establishment. The lady de Courcy, his cousin-german, was her governess and principal lady of honour; but, on his arrival at Windsor, it was represented to him, that this lady took as much state upon her as if she had been in the situation of her mother, the princess royal of England, or even the queen herself. The extravagance of the queen's governess knew no bounds. "For," said the king's informer, "she has eighteen horses at her command; but this does not suffice; she has a large train belonging to her husband, and his livery, whenever she comes and goes. She keeps two or three goldsmiths, two or three cutlers, and two or three furriers, constantly employed, as much as you and your queen. She is also building a chapel that will cost 1400 nobles."

Exasperated at this extravagance, the king dismissed the lady de Courcy from her office in the queen's establishment; he paid all the debts she had incurred, and commanded her to leave the country forthwith,—an order she certainly disobeyed, as will afterwards be seen. In the place of this lady, Richard appointed the widowed lady Mortimer,<sup>1</sup> who was his own niece Eleanor; to her he gave the precious charge of his fair young consort.

The scene of Richard's parting from Isabella was Windsor church. He had previously assisted at a solemn mass, and indulged his musical tastes by chanting a collect; he likewise made a rich offering. On leaving the church, he partook of wine and comfits at the door, with his

<sup>1</sup> Monstrelet and the MS. of the Ambassades.

<sup>2</sup> The whole of this passage is drawn from the MS. of the Ambassades. Lady Mortimer was Eleanor Holland.

little consort, then lifting her up in his arms he kissed her repeatedly, saying, "Adieu, madame, adieu, till we meet again."

The king immediately commenced his march to Bristol, and embarked on his ill-timed expedition to Ireland.

The landing of Henry of Bolingbroke at Ravenspur, during Richard's absence, had an immediate effect on the destination of the little queen Isabella; the regent York hurried her, from the castle of Windsor, to the still stronger fortress of Wallingford, where she remained while England was lost by her royal lord, and won by his rival, Henry of Bolingbroke.

After landing at Milford Haven on his return from Ireland, king Richard took shelter among the Welsh castles still loyal to him. Here he might have found refuge till a re-action in his favour in England gave hopes of better times; but the king's luxurious habits made the rough living at these castles intolerable to him. Indeed, De Marque declares, "that they were totally unfurnished, and that Richard had to sleep on straw during his sojourn in Wales. He endured this inconvenience for five or six nights, but in truth a farthing's worth of victuals was not to be found at any of them. Certes, I cannot tell the misery of the king's train, even at Caernarvon. He then returned to Conway, where he thus bewailed his absence from his wife, of whom he was very fond." The following seems a little poem, that the king composed in his tribulation:—

"My mistress and my consort! accursed be the man who thus separateth us; I am dying of grief because of it. My fair sister, my lady, and my sole desire! since I am robbed of the pleasure of beholding thee, such pain and affliction oppreseth my whole heart, that I am oft-times near despair. Alas, Isabel! rightful daughter of France, you were wont to be my joy, my hope, my consolation. And now I plainly see, that through the violence of fortune, which hath slain many a man, I must be deprived of you; whereat I often endure so sincere a pang, that day and night I am in danger of bitter death. And it is no marvel, when I from such a height have fallen so low, and lose my joy, my solace, and my consort."<sup>1</sup>

Henry of Bolingbroke, it is said, gained possession by a coup-d'état of 700,000*l.*, the treasury of the unfortunate Richard. With amazing celerity Henry traversed England, attended by sixty thousand Londoners and other malcontents, who had been disgusted with Richard's despotic government. With this disorderly militia Henry presented himself before the gates of Flint Castle, where Richard, and a few faithful knights, remained on the defensive. Here he boldly demanded an audience with the king, who agreed to admit him, and eleven others, to pass the wicket of the castle.<sup>2</sup>

Henry spoke aloud, without paying any honour or reverence to the king, asking, "Have you broken your fast?"

The king answered, "No, it is yet early morn. Why do you ask?"

<sup>1</sup> *Archæologia*, from the MS. of a French gentleman, an attendant on Richard, translated by the Rev. Mr. Webbe.

<sup>2</sup> Froissart.

"It is time you should breakfast," replied Henry, "for you have a great way to ride." "What road?" asked the king. "You must wend to London," said Henry; "and I advise that you eat and drink heartily, that you may perform the journey more gaily." "Well," said the king, "if that is the case, let the tables be covered." When this was done, the king washed his hands, seated himself at table, and was served. During the time the king was eating, which was not long, for his heart was much oppressed, the whole country, seen from the windows of the castle, was covered with men-at-arms and archers. The king, on rising from the table, perceived them, and asked his cousin who they were. "For most part Londoners," was the answer. "And what do they want?" asked the king. "They want to take *you*," said Henry, "and carry you prisoner to the Tower; and there is no pacifying them, unless you yield yourself my prisoner."

The king was alarmed at this intimation, for he knew the Londoners hated him, and would kill him if he were ever in their power; he therefore yielded himself prisoner to his cousin, promising to do whatever he should advise. His knights and officers surrendered likewise to Henry, who, in the presence of the eleven that accompanied him, received the king and his attendants as prisoners. He then ordered the horses to be saddled instantly and brought into the court, and the gates of the castle to be flung open; whereupon many archers and men-at-arms crowded into the court-yard.

"I heard," says Froissart, "of a singular circumstance that happened just then, which I must mention. King Richard had a greyhound, named Math, beautiful beyond description, who would not notice, or follow any one, but the king. Whenever Richard rode abroad, the greyhound was loosed by the person who had the care of him, and that instant he ran to caress the king, by placing his two fore feet on his shoulders. It fell out, that as the king and his cousin, Henry of Bolingbroke, were conversing in the court-yard of Flint Castle, their horses being preparing for them to mount, the greyhound Math was untied, when, instead of running as usual to king Richard, he passed him, and leaped to Henry's shoulders, paying him every court, the same as he used to his master, the king. Henry, not acquainted with this greyhound, asked the king the meaning of his fondness.

"'Cousin,' replied the king, 'it means a great deal for you, and very little for me.'

"'How?' said Henry; 'pray explain it.'

"'I understand by it,' said the unfortunate king, 'that this my favourite greyhound Math fondles and pays his court to you this day, as king of England, which you will be, and I shall be deposed, for that the natural instinct of the creature perceives. Keep him, therefore, by your side; for lo, he leaveth me, and will ever follow you!'

"Henry treasured up what king Richard had said, and paid attention to the greyhound Math, who would no more follow Richard of Bordeaux, but kept by the side of Henry, as was witnessed by thirty thousand men."

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.



The attendants of king Richard (who have chronicled the humiliations and sufferings of their royal master, on this pilgrimage of sorrow and degradation, with a more indignant pen than that of Froissart), declare that to grieve and break the spirit of the royal captive, his fine-spirited horses were taken from him, and he was compelled to perform every stage on sorry, miserable jades, not worth ten shillings. This was a deep mortification, since among the king's luxuries an expensive taste for noble and costly steeds had been one of the greatest. Perhaps this was after the king's attempted escape at Lichfield, where he dropped from a window of the tower in which he slept, but was perceived, and brought by force into Lichfield Castle again. As far as Coventry, parties of the king's faithful Welshmen pursued Henry of Bolingbroke's army, and harassed its rear. They were instigated and led by Richard's beloved squire and minstrel, Owen Glendower, who, from the hour when his royal patron became the prisoner of the aspiring Bolingbroke, vowed and maintained a lifelong enmity against the supplanter of his king.<sup>1</sup>

The young queen found herself in the power of the usurper almost simultaneously with her unfortunate husband. Directly the news arrived that Richard had surrendered himself, the garrisons of the royal castles of Windsor and Wallingford yielded to Henry of Bolingbroke. Tradition declares, that the young Isabella met her luckless husband on the road, during his sad pilgrimage towards the metropolis, as a captive to Henry, and that their meeting and parting were tender and heart-breaking; but the whole of Richard's progress has been minutely described by eye-witnesses, who, it may be thought, would not have been silent on a circumstance so picturesque and touching. This interview must, therefore, be considered as a mere romance of history, though Shakspeare has made use of it with beautiful effect.

In the midst of these changes, the young queen was hurried from place to place with little rest. From Wallingford she was carried by the popular party to Leeds Castle, in Kent, where she was placed under the care of the widowed duchess of Ireland, who, having been wronged by king Richard and his late queen, was not supposed to be extremely favourable to the cause of the imprisoned monarch. As lady de Courcy was sister to the duchess, she certainly obtained access to the queen again, notwithstanding her dismissal by king Richard, for she was at Leeds Castle when the insurgent Londoners took umbrage at her vicinity to the queen of Richard, and one of their leaders thus addressed her:—

“Lady, make instant preparations of departure, for we will not suffer you to remain longer here. Take care, on saying farewell to queen Isabel, that you show not any tokens of anger at our dismissing you,

<sup>1</sup> Among the most beautiful of the Welsh melodies still exists the well-known air, “Sweet Richard.” Tradition declares this melody was composed by Glendower about this time as a tribute of regret to his unfortunate prince; it was afterwards sung and played in the many risings in favour of Richard, with the same powerful effect that the celebrated Jacobite airs had on the partisans of the house of Stuart.

but tell her that your husband and daughter ' have sent to entreat your return. This we advise you to do, if you regard your life. You must ask no questions, and make no remarks to the queen, on anything that is going on. You will be escorted to Dover, and embarked in the passage-boat for Boulogne." The lady of Courcy, alarmed at these menaces, and knowing those who made them to be cruel and full of hatred, replied, "That in God's name she would do as they directed."

"Palfreys and hackneys were furnished for herself and attendants, and all the French of both sexes were sent off.<sup>2</sup> The French household of the queen being thus broken up, none were left with her that were at all attached to king Richard. A new retinue was formed for her, of ladies, damsels, and varlets, who were strictly enjoined never to mention the name of king Richard to her, or to acquaint her with what was become of him."<sup>3</sup>

It is asserted by all authors of that day, that the heart of the young Isabella was devoted to Richard; the chroniclers of her own country especially declare, "that he had behaved so amiably to her that she loved him entirely." While, by a cruel policy, her youthful mind was torn with the pangs of suspense, and the pain of parting from her native attendants, Richard was conveyed from Shene by night, and lodged secretly in the Tower, with such of his friends and ministers as were peculiarly obnoxious to the Londoners.

After enduring many mortifications at the Tower, king Richard offered to resign the crown to Henry of Bolingbroke, who immediately replied, "It is necessary that the three estates of the realm should hear this proposition; and in three days the parliaments will be collected, and can debate on the subject." So far his rejoinder was made with moderation and propriety, but he added—

"The people want to crown me; for the common report in the country is, that I have a better right to the crown than you. This was told our grandfather, king Edward, of happy memory, when he educated you, and had you acknowledged heir to the crown; but his love was so strong for his son, the prince of Wales, nothing could make him alter his purpose. If you had followed the example of the prince, you might still have been king; but you have always acted so contrary, as to occasion the rumour to be generally believed throughout England, that you were not the son of the prince of Wales, but of a priest or canon.

"I have heard several knights who were of the household of my uncle, the prince of Wales, declare that he was jealous of the conduct of the princess. She was cousin-german to king Edward, who began to dislike her for not having children by his son, for he knew that she had

<sup>1</sup> The count de Cilly was her husband, and Barbara de Courcy her daughter afterwards empress to the brother of Anne of Bohemia, the great emperor Sigismund; she was heiress of de Courcy.—*Brookes*.

<sup>2</sup> Either Froissart is mistaken in this assertion, or the French servants of the young queen were replaced by Henry IV., for the Minutes of Council contain a long list of French persons, who returned to France with Isabella, as officials of her household.

<sup>3</sup> Froissart, and MSS. of the Ambassades.

sons by her former marriage with sir Thomas Holland, since he had himself stood godfather to two. The princess of Wales knew well how to keep my uncle in her chains, having through subtlety enticed him to marry her; but fearful of being divorced by the king, his father, for want of heirs, and that the prince would marry again, it is said she had you and another son, who died in his infancy, by some other person; and from your modes of thinking and acting, being so different to the gallantry and prowess of the prince, it is thought you were the son of a priest or canon, for, at the time of your birth, there were many young and handsome ones, in the household of my uncle, at Bordeaux.

"Such is the report of this country, which your conduct has confirmed; for you have ever shown a great affection to the French, and a desire to live at peace with them, to the loss of the honour of England. Because my uncle of Gloucester and the good earl of Arundel gave you good advice, and wished you to follow in the footsteps of your ancestors, you have treacherously put them to death. As for me, I will give you my protection, and will guard and preserve your life through compassion, as long as I shall be able."<sup>1</sup>

For two hours did Henry thus converse, continuing to reproach the king with all the wrong he had ever been guilty of, in the whole course of his life. He then took leave, re-entered his barge, and returned to his house, and on the morrow renewed his orders for the assembling of parliament.

As an interlude to the narrative of Froissart, which details the deep dejection of Richard, the accounts given by his faithful attendant, and the manuscript of the Ambassades, show Richard, at intervals, with the lion-like despair of the Plantagenets awakened in his breast. Sometimes the thoughts of his young wife a prisoner like himself, and perhaps in equal danger, gave rise to tempests of rage, before whose sway the insolence of the usurper seems to have quailed, when in his presence. The time of the interview here described must have been one day of the three which intervened between the conference concerning the abdication just detailed and the meeting of parliament.

The dukes of York and Aumerle, and Henry, now called duke of Lancaster, went to the Tower, and sent the young earl of Arundel<sup>2</sup> to bid the king come to them, out of his privy chamber. When this message was delivered to Richard, he replied, "Tell Henry of Lancaster from me, I shall do no such thing; if he wants to see me, let him come to me." On entering the king's apartment, none showed any respect to him but Henry, who took off his cap, and, saluting him respectfully, said, "Here is our cousin the duke of Aumerle, and our uncle the duke of York, who wish to speak to you." Richard said, "Cousin, they are not fit to speak to me." "But have the goodness to hear them," said Henry. Upon which Richard uttered an oath, and said, turning to York,<sup>3</sup> "Thou villain! what wouldst thou say to me? and thou traitor of Rut-

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.

<sup>2</sup> Whose father Richard had put to death.

<sup>3</sup> Richard had left him regent of England, which he surrendered to Henry with a struggle.

land—thou art neither good nor worthy to speak to me, nor to bear the name of duke, earl, nor knight; thou, and the villain thy father, foully have ye betrayed me;<sup>1</sup> in a cursed hour were ye born; by your false counsel was my uncle Gloucester put to death!” Aumerle replied to the king, “that he lied,” and threw down his bonnet at his feet; upon which the king said, “I am king and thy lord, and will continue king, and be greater lord than I ever was, in spite of all my enemies?” Upon this, Henry imposed silence on Aumerle. Richard, then turning with a fierce countenance to Henry, asked “why he was in confinement, and why under a guard of armed men?” “Am I your servant or am I your king? What do you mean to do with me?” Henry replied, “You are my king and my lord, but the council of the realm have determined that you are to be kept in confinement till the decision of parliament.” The king then swore a deep oath, and said, “Let me have my wife.” “Excuse me,” replied Henry; “it is forbidden by the council that you should see queen Isabel.” Then the king in wrath walked about the room, breaking into passionate exclamations and appeals to Heaven, called them false traitors, offered to fight any four of them, threw down his bonnet as a gage, spoke “of his father’s and his grandfather’s fame, and his reign of twenty-one years.” Henry of Lancaster then fell on his knees, and besought him “to be quiet till the meeting of parliament.”

Before the meeting of parliament, this burst of spirit had subsided in deep despondency. Historians are not agreed whether the abdication of Richard took place in the hall of the Tower, or in Westminster Hall. Stow declares it was in Westminster Hall, and that by a singular coincidence, this ceremony was the first solemnised in that building, since its new erection by Richard. The parliament, in fact, waited, sitting in Westminster Hall, the termination of the following scene. Henry rode to the Tower with a selected number of prelates, dukes, earls, and knights, and dismounted in the court-yard; while king Richard, royally dressed, with the sceptre in his hand and the crown on his head, entered the hall in the Tower, but without supporters on either side, which was his usual state.

He then addressed the company as follows: “I have reigned king of England, duke of Aquitaine, and lord of Ireland, about twenty-two years; which royalty, lordship, sceptre, and crown, I now freely and willingly resign to my cousin, Henry of Lancaster, and entreat of him, in the presence of you all, to accept of this sceptre.” He then tendered the sceptre to Henry of Lancaster, who took it and gave it to the archbishop of Canterbury. King Richard next raised up his crown with both his hands from his head, and, placing it before him, said,—

“Henry, fair cousin, I present and give to you this crown, with which I was crowned king of England, and with it all the rights dependent on it.” Henry of Lancaster received the royal diadem, and delivered it over to the archbishop.

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<sup>1</sup> Aumerle had just surrendered the loyal city of Bristol, the last hope of the unfortunate king.

Thus was the resignation accepted; Henry of Lancaster calling in a public notary, that an authentic act might be drawn up of this proceeding, which was witnessed by all present. Soon after the king was led back to the apartments in the Tower, from whence he had been conducted. The two jewels (the crown and sceptre) were safely packed up and given to proper guards, who placed them in the treasury of Westminster Abbey, until they should be needed.<sup>1</sup>

The news of the restraint, in which the young queen of England was held, had been carried by some merchants of Bruges to the coast of France, together with the account of the deposition of her husband. But when the lady de Courcy arrived, who had been attached to the household of Isabella, the whole truth was known. Directly she alighted at the hotel of her lord at Paris, the king of France sent there to hear news of his daughter. The king of France was so much shocked at the ill tidings she told of Isabella and her husband, that though his health had been good for some time, his agitation, on hearing of his daughter's reverse of fortune, brought back his fits of frenzy.

The duke of Burgundy said, "The marriage of king Richard with Isabella was unadvised, and so I declared when it was proposed. Since the English have imprisoned king Richard, they will assuredly put him to death; for they always hated him because he preferred peace to war. They will as certainly crown Henry of Lancaster."

This prediction of the queen's uncle proved true. During the last days of September, Henry of Lancaster was recognised by the majority of the assembled parliament as king, and was magnificently crowned in October, without the slightest recognition of the prior claims of the orphan heirs of the earl of March.

While this revolution was effected, the young queen was removed to Sunning Hill; there she was kept a state prisoner, and sedulously misinformed regarding the events that had befallen her husband. The last hopes of king Richard had ended in despair, when his cousin Aumerle had yielded the loyal city of Bristol, and his brother-in-law Huntingdon gave up Calais, and swore fealty to Henry IV. This fealty, however, only lasted six weeks. A plot was set on foot, headed by Aumerle, Huntingdon, and Salisbury, for killing Henry IV. at a tournament they were about to give at Windsor. Henry, whose health soon broke under the anxieties which beset the crown of thorns he had assumed, was sick at Windsor Castle. There was a spiked instrument concealed in his bed, for the purpose of destroying him when he lay down to rest; its introduction, says the monk of Evesham, "was attributed to one of the young queen's servants."

Richard's doom was now sealed. He was hurried from the Tower to Pontefract Castle; meantime, the confederate lords flew to arms, and,

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<sup>1</sup> Froissart. This narrative is in perfect unison with the ancient laws and customs of England, which ordained that St. Edward's crown and regalia should be in the keeping of the abbot of Westminster.

dressing up king Richard's chaplain, Maudelain,<sup>1</sup> in royal robes, proclaimed that the deposed king had escaped from his gaolers.

The young queen Isabella took an extraordinary part in this movement for the restoration of her husband.<sup>2</sup> When the earls of Kent and Salisbury came with their forces to Sunning Hill, where she was abiding, they told her "they had driven the usurper, Bolingbroke, from Windsor to the stronghold of the Tower, and that her husband had escaped, and was then in full march to meet her at the head of a hundred thousand men." Overjoyed at this news, the young queen put herself at their disposal. She likewise took great pleasure in ordering the badges of Henry IV. to be torn from her household, and replaced by those of her royal husband; in which "harmless spite," says Hayward, "the queen Isabel took the utmost satisfaction." A proclamation was likewise issued in her name, declaring "that she did not recognise Henry of Lancaster as king." The queen then set out with her brother-in-law, the earl of Kent, and his allies, on their march to Wallingford and Abingdon. Full of joyful hope, the enthusiastic girl expected every hour to meet her king triumphant at the head of a loyal army. She was with the barons when they entered the fatal town of Cirencester; but, amidst the mysterious darkness which shrouds the termination of this insurrection, we lose sight of the actual manner in which the young queen was recaptured by Henry IV. Let fortune have declared for whatever party it might, disappointment alone was in store for the heart of Isabella, since the Richard, whom she hoped to meet, was but a counterfeit in royal robes to deceive the common people. The chiefs of the insurrection were betrayed by the mayor of Cirencester, and their summary execution followed in a few hours. Isabella was too young to be punished for her share in this rebellion, excepting by close restraint. She was sent, after quiet was restored, strictly guarded, to the palace of Havering atte Bower, and this appears to have been her place of residence, during the tragical events that succeeded the insurrection, in which she took a part so decided, considering her tender age.

These transactions took place at the end of January, and the beginning of February, 1400, when the insurrection was subdued; it became a favourite topic of conversation between the knights and lords of Henry's bed-chamber, who always concluded by observing on the impossibility that Henry IV. should reign peaceably while Richard II. was suffered to exist. The wily king gave no intimation that he heard these colloquies. After an abortive invasion by the count de St. Pol, Richard's brother-in-law, the king's flatterers and tempters beset him more than ever.

"Yet," says Froissart, emphatically, "the king of England made no

<sup>1</sup> He was exceedingly like Richard, and supposed to be an illegitimate son of one of the royal family; he was implicated in the illegal execution of the duke of Gloucester. He had adhered to Richard with the utmost fidelity, from his landing in Wales till his capture at Flint.

<sup>2</sup> Guthrie and Froissart. Sir John Hayward, p. 127, edition 1599. He says, the insurgent lords came to the queen from Colnebrook to Sunning, a place near Reading.

reply, but, leaving them in conversation, went to his falconers, and placing a falcon on his wrist, forgot all in feeding him." Froissart is far too courtly to acknowledge that so accomplished a knight as Henry of Lancaster ordered so foul a murder; but other historians do not allow, that Henry forgot all while feeding his falcon.

There are so many circumstantial details, in the narrative of old Fabian, concerning the death of Richard II., that there is little doubt of its being the true history of the murder of the unhappy king. Froissart has given the opening or prologue of the tragedy; but the following relation, gathered from Fabian and others, tells the manner in which it was played out.

King Henry, sitting one day at table, in a sighing manner said, "Have I no faithful friend who will deliver me of one whose life will be my death, and whose death my life?" "This speech was much noted of the hearers, especially by one sir Piers<sup>1</sup> of Exton. This knight left the court, and, with eight persons more, went suddenly to Pontefract Castle; whither being come, he called before him the squire, who was accustomed to wait on Richard at table, giving him a charge 'that the king should eat as much as he would,<sup>2</sup> for that now he should not long eat.' King Richard being set at dinner was served negligently, and without the usual ceremony of tasting the dishes, before he commenced his meal. Richard, marvelling at this sudden change, asked the reason, and was told that new orders had been given by king Henry to that effect.

"The devil take Henry of Lancaster and thee together!"<sup>3</sup> exclaimed the king in a passion, striking the man with a carving-knife. On that word, in rushed sir Piers Exton, with eight tall men, every man having a weapon in his hand. Richard, perceiving them, put the table back from him, and stepping up to the man next him, wrung the weapon out of his hand (a brown-bill), and therewith right valiantly defended himself; so that in conclusion four of them he slew outright. Sir Piers, amazed thereat, leaped upon the chair where king Richard usually sat (some authorities say it was a curiously carved stone chair); while with the four surviving ruffians the king was fiercely striving for conquest, and chasing them round the chamber, he passed near to the chair, whereon sir Piers had gotten, who with a pole-axe smote him on the back of the head, and withal, ridded him of his life in an instant."

Thus, battling like a champion of proof, in the full exercise of mighty

<sup>1</sup> There was a lord mayor, one of Richard's opposers, called Sir Thomas Exton.

<sup>2</sup> This observation shows that his food had been circumscribed.

<sup>3</sup> The very words of Shakspeare, who has merely cast Fabian's narrative into dialogue. Walsingham only mentions that Richard starved himself, and died on Valentine's day, 1400. This author is a thorough Lancastrian partisan, while alderman Fabian just wrote at that distance from the event in question, when the truth has not passed from the memory of man, and yet he can speak fearlessly. Fabian lived in the reign of Henry IV.'s grandson. As for gaining an actual exposure of a royal murder, from an *immediate* contemporary, it is not to be expected. Let the reader notice the ominous silence of Froissart on this subject. His words point at murder strongly, but they speak it not.

energies awakened at the call of despair, fell the son of the Black Prince, at the early age of thirty-two; he died instantly, in the triumphant flush of victory against fearful odds. The gallantry of his death seems, in the minds of his combative nobles, to have asperged the stain of illegitimacy, with which his rival foully tainted him. We hear no more, in chronicle, of his being the son of a priest.

"Richard of Bordeaux, when dead, was placed on a litter covered with black cloth, and a canopy of the same. Four black horses were harnessed to it, and four varlets in mourning conducted the litter, followed by four knights, dressed also in mourning," sir Piers being doubtless one of the knights, and the varlets the worthy survivors of Richard's eight assailants. They thus paraded the streets, at a foot's pace, till they came to the Chepe; which is the greatest thoroughfare in the city, and there they halted for upwards of two hours. More than twenty thousand persons came to see king Richard, who lay in the litter, his head on a black cushion,<sup>1</sup> and his face uncovered."<sup>2</sup>

Thus was queen Isabella left a widow in her thirteenth year; the death of her royal lord was concealed from her a considerable time; but she learned the murderous manner of it soon enough, to reject with horror all offers of union with the heir of Lancaster. Young as she was, Isabella gave proofs of a resolute and decisive character; traits of firm and faithful affection were shown by this youthful queen, which captivated the minds of the English, and caused her to be made the heroine of many an historical ballad,—a species of literature that the people of the land much delighted in at that time.

The young widow remained in a state of captivity at Havering Bower, while her royal father in France was labouring under a long and dolorous fit of insanity; brought on by anxiety for his daughter's fate. The French council of regency demanded the immediate restoration of the

<sup>1</sup> Froissart. The black cushion is mentioned by another witness: it was probably to conceal any accidental effusion of blood.

<sup>2</sup> Sir John Hayward adds the remarkable circumstance (p. 135), "that Richard's body was not only embalmed and cased, but soldered entirely in lead, all but the face." Thus, although the body was exposed to the view of the populace in all the towns through which it passed, as well as in the metropolis, no one could possibly ascertain what wounds were on the head. These precautions plainly point out the peculiar manner of Richard's death. Traditional evidence may be gathered from the tour of three Norwich gentlemen, in 1643, before the royal castle of Pontefract was dilapidated by Cromwell. "We scaled that high, stately, and impregnable castle builded by the Norman on a rock; which for strength, situation, and largeness, may compare with any in the kingdom. In the circuit of this castle are seven famous towers; the highest of them is called the Round Tower, in which that unfortunate prince, Richard II., fled round a post till his barbarous butchers deprived him of life. Upon that post the cruel hackings and fierce blows do still remain. We viewed the spacious hall which the giants kept, the large fair kitchen with many wide chimneys in it; we went up and saw the chamber of presence, the king and queen's chambers, the chapel, and many other rooms, all fit and suitable for princes."—*Brayley's Graphic Illustrator*, p. 94. The Round Tower is by Weaver (Funeral Monuments) called "the Bloody Tower," he says, by tradition of the country people in its vicinity, in memory of the murder of Richard II.



young queen, but Henry IV. would not hear of it, answering, "that she should reside in England like other queen-dowagers, in great honour, on her dower; and that if she had unluckily lost a husband, she should be provided with another forthwith, who would be young, handsome, and every way deserving of her love. Richard of Bordeaux was too old for her, but the person now offered was suitable in every respect; being no other than the prince of Wales."<sup>1</sup>

It seems strange that Isabella, who had expressed such infant pride in being queen of England, should give up voluntarily all prospect of enjoying that station, with a youthful hero, whose age was so suitable to her own; yet so it was. But she was inflexible in her rejection of the gallant Henry of Monmouth, and mourned her murdered husband in a manner exceedingly touching, as all who approached her, French or English, bore witness."<sup>2</sup> Her refusal would have been of little avail, if her family and country had not seen the matter in the same light. In reply to Henry IV.'s proposition, the French regency declared "that during the grievous illness of their lord king Charles, they could not give away his eldest daughter without his consent." Therefore, months passed away, and the maiden queen-dowager still continued a mourning widow, in the bowers of Havering. It is recorded that king Henry and his gallant heir did, in that interval, all in their power to win her constant heart from the memory of Richard, but in vain. She was just of the age to captivate the fancy of an ardent young prince like Henry of Monmouth; nor can there exist a doubt, by the extreme pertinacity with which he wooed the widow of his cousin, that she was beloved by him. However this may be, the modern paradox of Richard II.'s escape from the bloody towers of Pontefract<sup>3</sup> is utterly annihilated, by the continual efforts of Henry IV. to gain the hand of Isabella for his son. "Would Henry," asks an historical antiquary, in the *Archæologia*, "have been so desirous for the marriage of his heir with the widow of Richard, had he not been certain, beyond all doubt, that her husband was dead?" He would not surely have promoted a marriage, which would have illegitimated the heirs of Lancaster. This is one of the historical proofs of a disputed point which appeals directly to common sense.

When Charles VI. recovered his senses, he sent the count d'Albret to inquire into the situation of Isabella. King Henry and his council were at Eltham, where the French ambassador was splendidly entertained by him. He told Henry he had been sent by the king and queen of France to see the young queen their daughter. The king replied—

"We no way wish to prevent you from seeing her, but you must pro-

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.

<sup>2</sup> Monstrelet.

<sup>3</sup> Too much stress has been laid (by those who have worked hard to prove this paradox) on the fact, that Richard's skull was found entire, when his tomb was examined in Westminster Abbey. Let the antiquaries, however, consult medical authorities, and they will find that instant death may ensue, from a concussion on the brain, without the bone of the head being broken; and how easy it was, if the king had, indeed, been only stunned, for his assassins to compress his mouth and nostrils, so that the return of respiration was prevented!

mise, on oath, that neither yourself, nor any of your company, speak to her any thing concerning Richard of Bordeaux. Should you do otherwise, you will greatly offend us and the whole country, and remain in peril of your lives while here."

Not long after this, the earl of Northumberland carried count d'Albret to Havering atte Bower, where Isabella then resided. She was attended by the duchess of Ireland, the duchess of Gloucester, her two daughters, and other ladies and damsels as companions. The earl introduced the French embassy to the young queen, who conversed some time with them, asking eagerly many questions after her royal parents. They kept the promise they had made, by never mentioning king Richard, and returned to London after a short interview. At Eltham, on their way home, they dined with king Henry, who presented them with some rich jewels. When they took leave, he said amicably, "Tell those who sent you that the queen shall never suffer the smallest harm, or any disturbance, but shall keep up a state and dignity becoming her birth and rank, and enjoy all her rights; for, young as she is, she ought not to be made acquainted with all the changes that happen in this world."<sup>1</sup>

The council of Henry IV. meantime anxiously deliberated on the destination of the young queen.<sup>2</sup> It came at last to the decision, that Isabella, being of tender age, had no right to claim revenue as queen-dowager of England; but that, as no accommodation could be effected by the marriage with the prince of Wales, she ought to be restored to her friends directly, with all the jewels and paraphernalia that she brought with her.<sup>3</sup> But on this point a grand difficulty arose, for Henry IV. had seized the little queen's jewels, and divided them among his six children, the prince of Wales having the greatest share. The king wrote to his council declaring "that he had commanded his son and other children to give up the jewels of their dear cousin queen Isabella, and that they were to be sent to London." But intention and performance are very different matters, for that "the dear cousin's jewels" were never returned we have the evidence of the queen's uncle, Orleans, and the French treaties between Henry V. and Charles VI.<sup>4</sup> Nor are they named with her property specified in her journey to Leulinghen; yet in the schedule her silver drinking-cup, a few silver saucers and dishes, with a little old tapestry, are pompously enumerated. It is worthy of remark, to show the extreme parsimony of Henry, that an item demanding new clothes for the young queen and her maids of honour, with cloth for their charrettes or chariots, is sharply met by the answer, "that the king's wardrobe had given out all that he intended."

Queen Isabella set out for London, May 27, accompanied by two ladies of the royal family, who had both received great injuries from

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.

<sup>2</sup> For this information and the rest of the facts following, we are indebted to sir Harris Nicolas' invaluable edition of the Minutes of the Privy Council, vol. i. pp. 118-134, 145.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 10, where a description is given of her robes, and an estimate of the value of her jewels.

<sup>4</sup> Rapin, vol. i. Henry V.'s reign.

Richard II.<sup>1</sup> The duchess of Ireland was one, and the countess of Hereford<sup>2</sup> (mother to the duchess of Gloucester, the widow of the slaughtered Thomas of Woodstock), the other. To these ladies was consigned the care, or rather the custody, of Isabella's person. The sweetness of this angelic girl's disposition had certainly converted these natural enemies into loving friends, as will presently be shown. Next in rank to these great ladies in the train of Isabella was Eleanor Holland, the young widow of Roger, earl of March, slain in Ireland, whose son was heir of England *de jure*; she had been appointed governess to the queen by Richard II., and still adhered to her, though merely classed now among her ladies of honour: the other ladies were, lady Poinings, lady Mowbray, and Madame de Vache. Isabella had likewise seven maids of honour, and two French chambermaids, Simonette and Marianne. The French chamberlain was Monsieur de Vache. She had a confessor and a secretary. She was escorted by the bishops of Durham and Hereford, and by the earl of Somerset, Henry IV.'s half-brother, with four knights bannerets and six chevaliers.

With this train and escort the young queen set out from Havering.<sup>3</sup> At Tottenham Cross, she was met by the late lord chamberlain, the earl of Worcester, with a gallant company, who joined her train. The lord mayor and his viscounts (as the aldermen were then called), with other good people of the city, met her at Sandford-hill, and, falling in with her procession, guarded her to London. At Hackney, prince Thomas, second son to Henry IV., met the young queen, and honourably accompanied her to London, assisted by the constable of England, the marshal, and other great officers.

It is supposed Isabella tarried at the Tower from the day of her London entry, for she did not sail for France till July 1st following, when three ballingers and two armed barges were appointed to receive her and her suite at Dover.

July was far advanced before the maiden widow of Richard II. was restored to her parents; during which time Henry IV. and his son tried every means in their power to shake her childish constancy to the memory of Richard. But her "steady aversion," as Monstrelet calls her refusal, remained the same; the situation of this child was extraordinary, and her virtuous firmness, more probable in a royal heroine of twenty-eight than in one who had seen little more than half as many

<sup>1</sup> See preceding volume, memoir of Anne of Bohemia.

<sup>2</sup> This lady, called countess of Hereford, was the mother of the co-heiresses of Hereford, the duchess of Gloucester, and Mary, the deceased wife of the usurper Henry IV. The duchess of Gloucester, who had been in the family of Isabella, had lately lost her promising son, by the plague, and had died of grief. Her mother, this countess of Hereford, was the grandmother, by the maternal side, of Henry V.

<sup>3</sup> Froissart mentions this dower-palace of the English queens as her latest residence. It is possible that some political reason might have made Isabella's *cortège* travel through Waltham forest, and lodge at Waltham hunting palace, then she might cross the Lea to gain the north road instead of the east road, for her course was plainly by Tottenham-hill, and her entrance into London by Hackney.—See *Minutes of Privy Council*, vol. i. p. 145.

summers. At last, the usurper resolved to restore the young widow to France, but refused to return her dowry, saying, that as a great favour he would agree to deduct its amount from the sum total that France still owed England, for the ransom of king John. The jewels of the young queen he likewise retained, although it was expressly stipulated by the will of king Richard that, in case of his death, the rich jewels his little wife had brought from France should be restored to her. Henry could not plead ignorance of his cousin's testament, since the poor king's will, while he was yet alive, had been broken open to furnish articles of accusation against him.<sup>1</sup>

The royal virgin was approaching her fifteenth year when thus plundered, and, wearing the deep weeds of widowhood, she embarked at Dover for Calais, escorted by the same sir Thomas Percy<sup>2</sup> who had attended her as chamberlain during her espousals. Notwithstanding the fact that his family had been "the ladder wherewithal the mounting Bo-lingbroke ascended the throne of Richard," there is little doubt that sir Thomas Percy's heart ever beat loyally towards his rightful master, for he was bathed in tears during the time he thus conducted the young widow of Richard to her native shores.

"My queen to France from whence set forth in pomp  
She came adorned hither like sweet May,  
Sent back like Hallowmas, or shortest day."—*Shakspeare*.

Leulinghen, a town between Boulogne and Calais, a sort of frontier ground of the English territory, was the spot appointed for the restoration of Isabella to her uncle of Burgundy. "It was on the 26th of July, 1402, when sir Thomas Percy, with streaming tears, took the young queen by the arm, and delivered her with good grace into the hands of Waleran count St. Pol, surnamed the Righteous,<sup>3</sup> and received certain letters of quittance for her from the French. In these the English commissioners declared, that the young queen was just as she had been received, and Percy offered to fight *à l'outrance* any one who should assert the contrary." To do the French justice, they could not have welcomed back their young princess royal with more enthusiasm and loyalty, if she had been dowered with all the wealth of England, instead of returning destitute, and plundered of all but her beauty and honour.

The virtues and sweet temper of the youthful queen had won the affections of her English ladies, for our manuscript pursues<sup>4</sup>—

"Know, before the parties separated, they all wept most piteously, and when they came to quit the chapel of our Lady at Leulinghen, queen Isabel, whose young heart is full of tenderness and kindliness, brought all her English ladies, who were making sore lamentations, unto the

<sup>1</sup> See these articles in Rapin, who makes no comment on this monstrous proceeding, which is really without precedent for absurdity.

<sup>2</sup> Afterwards the earl of Worcester, so famous in the Percy rebellion.

<sup>3</sup> He was brother-in-law to king Richard.

<sup>4</sup> This is from the MSS. of the Ambassades. Hall's Chronicle says, Percy took a regular receipt for the queen that she had been safely delivered, worded somewhat like a receipt for a bale of merchandise.

French tents, where she made them dine with her. And after dinner, queen Isabel took all the jewels she had remaining, and divided them among the lords and ladies of England who had accompanied her, who all, nevertheless, wept mightily with sorrow at parting with their young queen. Yet still she sweetly bade them 'be of good cheer,' though weeping herself; nevertheless, at the moment of parting, all renewed their lamentations."

"The damsel of Montpensier, sister to the count de la Marche, the damsel of Luxemburgh, sister to the count de St. Pol; and many other noble ladies, were sent by the queen of France to wait upon her daughter.

"Then the count St. Pol led her to the dukes of Burgundy and Bourbon, who, with a large company of armed men, were waiting, intending, if any demur had taken place regarding the restoration of their niece, to have charged the English party over hill and over valley, and taken her back by force to her fair sire the king of France."

She was received by her countrymen with every honour, and thence escorted to Boulogne and to Abbeville, where the duke of Burgundy, to celebrate her return, made a grand banquet. She then proceeded through France to Paris, "where her coming caused many a tear and many a smile."<sup>2</sup> Most kindly was she received by the king and queen of France; but though it was pretended, by king Henry, that she was restored with every honour, yet there was not any revenue or dower assigned her from England as queen-dowager."

Louis duke of Orleans, who was anxious to obtain the maiden queen as a bride for his promising heir, undertook to championise her wrongs. He sent a challenge, soon after her arrival in France, to Henry IV., defying him, as the plunderer of the young queen and the murderer of her husband, and offering to fight him in the lists, on this quarrel. Henry coldly replied, "He knew of no precedent which offered the example of a crowned king entering the lists to fight a duel with a subject, however high the rank of that subject might be."

"How could you suffer," replies Isabella's uncle,<sup>3</sup> in his letter of defiance, "my much redoubted lady, madame queen of England, to return to her country desolate by the loss of her lord, despoiled of her dower, and of all the property she carried hence on her marriage? He who seeks to gain honour must support her cause. Are not noble knights bound to defend the rights of widows and virgins of virtuous life, such as my niece was known to lead?" He concludes his epistle with bitter thanks for the superior care Henry took of the safety of the French knights, by refusing the combat, to what he did of the health and life of his own royal lord king Richard.

This taunt roused Henry into the indignant denial of the murder of his "dear lord and cousin king Richard, (whom God absolve.)" He

<sup>1</sup> Monstrelet, and MSS. of the Ambassadors.

<sup>2</sup> Monstrelet.

<sup>3</sup> These letters are translated in the "Pictorial History of England;" likewise see Carte, Monstrelet, and Guthrie.

continues, "God knows how and by whom that death was done,<sup>1</sup> but if you mean to say his death was caused by our order or consent, we answer that you lie, and will lie foully oft as you say so."

The pertinacity of Henry IV. to gain the "sweet young queen" as a bride for his gallant son was not overcome even by this furious correspondence with her uncle. In the year 1406, according to Monstrelet, he made a most extraordinary proposal, declaring that if the hand of Isabella (now in her eighteenth year) were bestowed on the prince of Wales, he would abdicate the English crown in favour of the young prince.<sup>2</sup> The royal council of France sat in debate on this offer for a long time; but the king's brother, Louis duke of Orleans, contended that he had the promise of the hand of Isabella for his son Charles of Angoulême; he represented the frauds of the king of England, and called to their memory the "steady aversion" of his niece to ally herself with the assassin of the husband she still loved. An unfavourable answer was therefore given to the English ambassadors, who departed malcontent.

The betrothment of Isabella to her youthful cousin took place at Compiègne, where her mother, queen Isabeau, met the duke of Orleans and his son. Magnificent fêtes took place at the ceremony, consisting of "banquets, dancings, jousts, and other jollities." But the bride wept bitterly while her hand was pledged to a bridegroom so much younger than herself; the court charitably declared that her tears flowed on account of her losing the title of queen of England; but the heart of the fair young widow had been too severely schooled in adversity to mourn over a mere empty name.<sup>3</sup> Her thoughts were on king Richard.

The husband of Isabella became duke of Orleans in 1407, when his father was atrociously murdered in the Rue Barbette, by his kinsman, the duke of Burgundy. Isabella took a decided part in demanding justice to be executed on the powerful assassin of her uncle and father-in-law.<sup>4</sup>

"The young queen-dowager of England came with her mother-in-law, Violante of Milan, duchess of Orleans, both dressed in the deepest weeds of black. They arrived without the walls of Paris in a charrette, or wagon, covered with black cloth, drawn by six snow-white steeds, whose funeral trappings strongly contrasted with their colour. Isabella and her mother-in-law sat weeping in the front of the wagon; a long

<sup>1</sup> Here is an evident admission that Richard died by violence,—but Henry asserts without his orders; thus corroborating the account of the murder as connected with sir Piers Exton. Had Richard been starved, Henry would have declared his blood was not shed.

<sup>2</sup> No English historian can believe this assertion, yet Gifford in his admirable History of France does not dispute it.

<sup>3</sup> Monstrelet, and the Chronicles of St. Denis. Monstrelet declares that Charles duke of Orleans had been the godfather of Isabella, and therefore a dispensation was required on that account, as well as because they were first-cousins; but the dates of the birth of Isabella and Orleans show that this was an impossibility. It is possible that Isabella had been godmother to Orleans. A very slight verbal error of the transcribers of Monstrelet might cause the mistake in French.

<sup>4</sup> Chronicles of St. Denis.

file of mourning wagons, filled with the domestics of the princesses, followed. They were met at the gates by most of the princes of the blood."<sup>1</sup> This lugubrious train passed, at a foot's pace, through the streets of that capital stained by the slaughter of Orleans. The gloomy appearance of the procession, the downcast looks of the attendants, the flowing tears of the princesses, for a short time excited the indignation of the Parisians against the popular murderer, John of Burgundy. Isabella alighted at the gates of the Hôtel de St. Pol, where, throwing herself at the feet of her half-crazed father, she demanded, in concert with the duchess Violante, justice on the assassin of her uncle. The unfortunate king of France was thrown into fresh agonies of delirium by the violent excitement produced by the sight of his suppliant daughter and sister-in-law.

A year afterwards the same mournful procession traversed Paris again; Isabella again joined Violante in crying for justice, not to the unconscious king, who was raving in delirium, but to the dauphin Louis, whose feeble hands held the reins of empire his father had dropped.

Soon after, Isabella attended the death-bed of the duchess Violante, who died positively of a broken heart for the loss of Orleans. The following year Isabella was married to her cousin: the previous ceremony had been only betrothment. The elegant and precocious mind of this prince soon made the difference of the few years between his age and that of his bride forgotten. Isabella loved her husband entirely; he was the pride of his country, both in mind and person. He was that celebrated poet duke of Orleans, whose beautiful lyrics are still reckoned among the classics of France.<sup>2</sup> Just as Isabella seemed to have attained the height of human felicity, adored by the most accomplished prince in Europe, beloved by his family, and with no present alloy in her cup of happiness, death claimed her as his prey in the bloom of her life. She expired at the castle of Blois, in her twenty-second year, a few hours after the birth of her infant child, Sept. 13th, 1410. Her husband's grief amounted to frenzy; but after her infant was brought to him by her attendants, he shed tears, and became calmer while caressing it.<sup>3</sup> The first verses of Orleans that attained any celebrity were poured forth by his grief for this sad bereavement. He says,—

Alas!

Death, who made thee so bold  
To take from me my lovely princess?  
Who was my comfort, my life,  
My good, my pleasure, my riches.  
Alas! I am lonely, bereft of my mate—  
Adieu, my lady, my lily!  
Our loves are for ever severed.

<sup>1</sup> Chronicles of St. Denis.

<sup>2</sup> In the public library of Grenoble is a fine copy of the poems of Charles duke of Orleans, the husband of this queen of England. It was written from his dictation by his secretary, Antoine l'Astisan. It has been copied for the Bibliothèque Royale. Another fine copy exists, richly illuminated, in the British Museum, supposed to have been transcribed for Henry VII.

<sup>3</sup> Isabella's infant was a little girl, who was reared, and afterwards married to the duke of Alençon.

But a more finished lyric to the memory of Isabella thus commences in French. <sup>1</sup>—*J'ai fait l'obsèque de Madame.*<sup>2</sup>

## TRANSLATION.

To make my lady's obsequies  
 My love a minster wrought,  
 And in the chantry service there  
 Was sung by doleful thought.  
 The tapers were of burning sighs,  
 That light and odour gave,  
 And grief illumined by tears  
 Irradiated her grave;  
 And round about, in quaintest guise,  
 Was carved — "Within this tomb there lies  
 The fairest thing to mortal eyes."

Above her lieth spread a tomb  
 Of gold and sapphires blue:  
 The gold doth show her blessedness,  
 The sapphires mark her true;  
 For blessedness and truth in her  
 Were livelyly portray'd,  
 When gracious God, *with both his hands*,  
 Her wondrous beauty made;  
 She was, to speak without disguise,  
 The fairest thing to mortal eyes.

No more, no more; my heart doth faint,  
 When I the life recall  
 Of her who lived so free from taint,  
 So virtuous deemed by all;  
 Who in herself was so complete,  
 I think that she was ta'en  
 By God to deck his Paradise,  
 And with his saints to reign;  
 For well she doth become the skies,  
 Whom, while on earth, each one did prize  
 The fairest thing to mortal eyes!

The exquisite beauty and *naïve* earnestness of the last verse, will inspire all readers with respect for the genius of the second husband of our Isabella.

Isabella, thus passionately mourned in death by her husband, was happy in closing her eyes before the troublous era commenced, when sorrow and disgrace overwhelmed her family and her country. The infamy of her mother had not reached its climax during the life of Isa

<sup>1</sup> We believe the translation is by the elegant pen of Mr. Carey. Whoever wishes further acquaintance with the lyrics of Charles of Orleans, will find many well worthy of attention translated by Miss L. Costello, in her truly poetical version of the Early Poets of France.

<sup>2</sup> This expression, *Madame*, simply denotes the title of Isabella; she was *madame* of France, both as eldest daughter to the king, and wife to the second prince of France. That the title of *Madame* was thus applied in the fourteenth century, see Froissart, when narrating the adventures of Isabella's mother-in-law Violante of Milan.



bella. Charles of Orleans, by the peculiar malice of fortune, was doomed to a long imprisonment by the very man who had so often been refused by his wife—a circumstance which perhaps was not altogether forgotten by Henry V. The gallant husband of Isabella, after fighting desperately at Agincourt, was left for dead on the lost field; but, being dragged from beneath a heap of slain, was restored to unwelcome life by the care of a valiant English squire, Richard Waller. Orleans refused to eat or drink, after recovering from his swoon, but was persuaded out of his resolution of starving himself to death by the philosophic and friendly remonstrances of Henry V. His wounds soon healed, and he was seen riding side by side with his conqueror and kinsman, conversing in the most friendly terms, a few days after the victory of Agincourt.

But after thus reconciling his unfortunate captive to life, Henry refused all ransom for him, because he was the next heir to the throne of France after Charles the Dauphin. Orleans was sent to England, and at first confined at Groombridge, in Kent, the seat of Waller, but was afterwards consigned to a severe imprisonment in the Tower of London, where he composed some of his most beautiful poems. It was well that his fine mind possessed resources in itself, for his captivity lasted twenty-three years!

Isabella was first interred at Blois, in the abbey of St. Laumer, where her body was found entire, in 1624, curiously wrapped in bands of linen, plated over with quicksilver. It was soon after transferred to the church of the Celestines, in Paris, the family burying-place of the line of Orleans.

# JOANNA OF NAVARRE,

## QUEEN OF HENRY IV.

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### CHAPTER I.

Joanna's parentage—Descent—Evil character of her father—Her early youth—Contracted to the prince of Castille—Contract broken—Captured by the French—Rage of her father—Her release—Demanded by the duke of Bretagne—Dower—Marriage—Horrible death of her father—Her husband's jealousy of Oliver Clisson—Birth and death of Joanna's daughter—Heir of Bretagne born—French ambassadors saved by Joanna—Her conjugal influence—Her son betrothed to Joanna of France—Besieged at Vannes—She meditates a peace—Her daughter contracted to the heir of Derby (Henry V.)—Contract broken—Espousals of two of her children—Joanna's first acquaintance with the Earl of Derby (Henry IV.) at Vannes—His floral emblem—Receives assistance from the Duke—His successful enterprise—Death of the Duke of Bretagne—His will—Joanna regent of Bretagne—Her wise government—Inauguration of her son—Sought in marriage by Henry IV.—Outwits the pope—Married to Henry by proxy—Visit of the Duke of Burgundy to Joanna—His presents to her and her children—Joanna puts her sons into his hands—Her deed of gift to her aunt.

JOANNA, or Jane of Navarre, the consort of Henry IV., is one of those queens of England whose records, as connected with the history of this country, are of a very obscure and mysterious character; yet the events of her life, when traced through foreign chronicles and unpublished sources of information, are replete with interest, forming an unprecedented chapter in the history of female royalty.

Joanna was the second daughter of a prince of evil repute, Charles d'Albret, king of Navarre, surnamed the Bad, whose mother was the only child of Louis X. of France, by Clemence of Hungary; and, being barred by the Salique law from the throne of France, espoused the count of Evreux, and transmitted to her son the petty kingdom of Navarre.<sup>1</sup> By this illustrious maternal descent, the father of Joanna was the representative of the elder line of St. Louis. Her mother was Jane, the daughter of the gallant and unfortunate John, king of France. Joanna was born about the year 1370. She was contracted, in 1380, to John, heir of Castille, at which time her eldest brother, Charles,<sup>2</sup> heir of Navarre, was married to the sister of that prince. Political reasons caused

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<sup>1</sup> Inherited from Jane, queen of Navarre, consort of Philip le Bel of France.

<sup>2</sup> Froissart.

her appointed bridegroom, on the death of his father, to break his engagement with Joanna, and to espouse a princess of Arragon.

The intrigues and crimes of Charles the Bad, who was perpetually engaging in some unprincipled project or other, with a view to establishing himself on the disputed throne of his grandfather,<sup>1</sup> rendered the early youth of Joanna and her brethren a season of painful vicissitude. On one of these occasions, when this unquiet prince had embroiled himself with the regents of France, Joanna and her two elder brothers, Charles and Pierre of Navarre, having been sent for better security to the castle of Breteuil, in Normandy, were, in the year 1381, made prisoners and carried to Paris, where they were detained as hostages for their father's future conduct. Charles le Mauvais, finding his entreaties for their liberation fruitless, out of revenge suborned a person to poison both the regents. The emissary was detected and put to death, but Charles, the greater criminal of the two, was out of the reach of justice.<sup>2</sup>

Joanna and her brother might have been imperilled by the lawless conduct of their father, had they not been in the hands of generous foes—the brothers of their deceased mother; but, though detained for a considerable time as state prisoners in Paris, they were affectionately and honourably treated by the court of France. Their liberation was finally obtained through the mediation of the king of Castille, whose sister, the bride of young Charles of Navarre, with unceasing tears and supplications, wrought upon him to intercede for their release. Thus did Joanna of Navarre owe her deliverance to the prince by whom she had been betrothed and forsaken.

In the year 1386, a marriage was negotiated between Joanna and John de Montfort, duke of Bretagne, surnamed the Valiant. This prince, who was in the decline of life, had already been twice married.<sup>3</sup> On the death of his last duchess without surviving issue, the dukes of Berri and Burgundy, fearing the duke would contract another English alliance, proposed their niece, Joanna of Navarre, to him for a wife.<sup>4</sup> The lady Jane of Navarre, Joanna's aunt, had married, seven years previously, the viscount de Rohan, a vassal and kinsman of the duke of Bretagne, and it was through the agency of this lady that the marriage between her new sovereign and her youthful niece was brought about.<sup>5</sup>

That this political union was, notwithstanding the disparity of years and the violent temper of the duke, agreeable to the bride, there is full evidence in the grateful remembrance which Joanna retained of the good

<sup>1</sup> He is also accused by contemporary historians of practising the dark mysteries of the occult sciences, in the unhallowed privacy of his own palace; and it is certain that, as a poisoner, Charles of Navarre acquired an infamous celebrity throughout Europe.

<sup>2</sup> Mezerai. Moreri.

<sup>3</sup> First to Mary Plantagenet, the daughter of his royal patron and protector, Edward III., with whose sons he had been educated and taught the science of war. Mary dying without children in the third year of her marriage, he espoused, secondly, Jane Holland, the half-sister of Richard II. of England.

<sup>4</sup> Dom Morice. Chron. de Bretagne.

<sup>5</sup> Dom Morice.

offices of her aunt on this occasion,<sup>1</sup> long after the nuptial tie between her and her mature lord had been dissolved by death, and she had entered into matrimonial engagements with Henry IV. of England.

The duke of Bretagne having been induced, by the representations of the lady of Rohan and the nobles attached to the cause of France, to lend a favourable ear to the overtures for this alliance, demanded Joanna's hand of her father, and gave commission to Pierre de Lesnerac to man and appoint a vessel of war to convey the young princess to the shores of Bretagne.

Pierre embarked on the 12th of June, 1386. There is, in "*Preuves Historiques*," a memorial of the expenses of Pierre de Lesnerac for this voyage, specifying that he stocked the vessels with the provisions required for the royal bride and her train.

The contract of marriage between the duke of Bretagne and Joanna was signed at Pampeluna, August 25th, 1386. The king of Navarre engaged to give his daughter 120,000 livres of gold of the coins of the kings of France, and 6000 livres of the rents due to him on the lands of the viscount d'Avranches.<sup>2</sup> The duke, on his side, assigned to the princess, for her dower, the cities of Nantes and Guerrand, the barony of Rais, of Chatellenic de Touffon, and Guerche. Joanna then departed with Pierre de Lesnerac and her escort for Bretagne, and on the 11th of September, 1386, was married to the duke of Bretagne at Saillé, near Guerrand, in the presence of many of the nobles, knights, and squires of Bretagne.<sup>3</sup> A succession of feasts and pageants of the most splendid description were given by the duke of Bretagne at Nantes, in honour of his nuptials with his young bride.<sup>4</sup>

In the beginning of the new year, February 1387, "in token of their mutual affection and delight in their union, the duke and duchess exchanged gifts of gold, sapphires, pearls, and other costly gems, with horses, falcons, and various sorts of wines."<sup>5</sup>

Joanna appears to have possessed the greatest influence over her husband's heart, and to have been treated by him with the fondest consideration, on all occasions, although her father was unable to fulfil his promise with regard to the portion the duke was to have received with her.

The death of Joanna's father, which took place the same year, was attended with circumstances of peculiar horror. He had long been suffering from a complication of maladies. In hopes of recovering his paralytic limbs from their mortal chillness, he caused his whole person to be sewn up in cloths dipped in spirits of wine and sulphur. One night, after these bandages had been fixed, neither knife nor scissors being at hand, the careless attendants applied the flame of the candle to sever the needle with which the linen had been sewn; the spirits of wine instantly ignited, and the wretched Charles was burned so dreadfully, that, after lingering several days, he expired,<sup>6</sup> January 1st, 1387.

<sup>1</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*.

<sup>2</sup> Dom Morice. *Preuves Historiques*.

<sup>3</sup> Dom Morice. *Chron. de Bretagne*.

<sup>4</sup> Dom Morice. *Chron. de Bretagne*.

<sup>5</sup> Froissart.

<sup>6</sup> Froissart.

leaving his throne to his gallant patriotic son, Charles the Good, and his name to the general reprobation of all French chroniclers.

The Bretons, who had, according to Don Morice, boded no good either to themselves or to their duke, from his connexion with this prince, far from sympathising with the grief of their young duchess for the tragical death of her last surviving parent, rejoiced in the deliverance of the earth from a monster whose crimes had rendered him a disgrace to royalty.<sup>1</sup>

The last bad act of the life of Charles le Mauvais, had been to insinuate to his irascible son-in-law that Oliver de Clisson entertained a criminal passion for the young duchess of Bretagne;<sup>2</sup> and this idea excited in his mind a thirst for vengeance, which nearly involved him and all connected with him in ruin.

In early life, John the Valiant and Clisson had been united in the tenderest ties of friendship. The courage and military skill of Clisson had greatly contributed to the establishment of this prince's claims to the dukedom of Bretagne. Latterly, however, Clisson had opposed the duke's political predilections in favour of England, as productive of much evil to Bretagne; and he had further caused great offence to the duke, by ransoming, at his own expense, John count de Penthievres, the rival claimant of the duchy, from his long captivity in England, and marrying him to his eldest daughter and co-heiress, Margaret de Clisson, just at the time when there appeared a prospect of the duchess Joanna bringing an heir to Bretagne.<sup>3</sup>

Clisson was the commander of the armament preparing by France for the invasion of England, which was to sail from Treguer, in Bretagne, the king and regents of France imagining that they had wholly secured the friendship of the duke, by his marriage with their young kinswoman, Joanna of Navarre. Their plans were completely frustrated by the unexpected arrest of Clisson by the duke,<sup>4</sup> of which Froissart gives the following lively account; attributing, however, to political motives a proceeding which appears to have been dictated by furious jealousy.

Dissembling the deadly malice of his intentions under the deceitful blandishments with which the fell designs of hatred are so frequently masked, he wrote the most affectionate letters to the constable, requesting his presence, as a vassal peer of Bretagne, at a parliament which he had summoned to meet at Vannes, where his duchess was then holding her court at the castle De la Motte.<sup>5</sup>

Suspecting no ill, the constable came with other nobles and knights to attend this parliament. The duke gave a grand dinner to the barons of Bretagne, at his castle De la Motte, and entertained them with an appearance of the most affectionate hospitality till a late hour. The constable of France<sup>6</sup> then invited the duke and the same company to dine

<sup>1</sup> Nouveau Dictionnaire Historique. Dom Morice. Chron. de Bretagne.

<sup>2</sup> MSS. process against the king of Navarre, quoted by Guthrie. Guthrie calls Joanna, by mistake, Mary.

<sup>3</sup> Froissart. <sup>4</sup> Ibid. Chroniques de Bretagne.

<sup>5</sup> Froissart. <sup>6</sup> Ibid.

with him on the following day. The duke accepted the invitation very frankly, and behaved in the most friendly manner, seating himself among the guests, with whom he ate, drank, and conversed, with every appearance of good-will. When the repast was concluded, he invited the constable Clisson, the lord de Beaumanoir, and some others, to come with him and see the improvements made by him at his fine castle of Ermine, which he had nearly rebuilt and greatly beautified, on the occasion of his late marriage with the princess of Navarre.

The duke's behaviour had been so gracious and winning, that his invitation was frankly accepted, and the unsuspecting nobles accompanied him on horseback to the castle. When they arrived, the duke, the constable, and the lords Laval and Beaumanoir dismounted, and began to view the apartments. The duke led the constable by the hand from chamber to chamber, and even into the cellars, where wine was offered. When they reached the entrance of the keep, the duke paused, and invited Clisson to enter and examine the construction of the building, while he remained in conversation with lord de Laval.<sup>1</sup>

The constable entered the tower alone, and ascended the staircase. When he had passed the first floor, some armed men, who had been ambushed there, shut the door below, seized him, dragged him into an apartment, and loaded him with three pair of fetters. As they were putting them on, they said, "My lord, forgive what we are doing, for we are compelled to this by the authority of the duke of Bretagne."

When the lord de Laval, who was at the entrance of the tower, heard the door shut with violence, he was afraid of some plot against his brother-in-law, the constable; and, turning to the duke, who looked as pale as death, was confirmed that something wrong was intended, and cried out, "Ah! my lord, for God's sake, what are they doing? Do not use any violence against the constable."

"Lord de Laval," said the duke, "mount your horse, and go home while you may; I know very well what I am about."<sup>2</sup>

"My lord," said Laval, "I will never depart without my brother-in-law, the constable."

Then came the lord de Beaumanoir, whom the duke greatly hated, and asked, "Where the constable was?" The duke, drawing his dagger, advanced to him and said, "Beaumanoir, dost thou wish to be like thy master?"

"My lord," replied Beaumanoir, "I cannot believe my master to be otherwise than in good plight."

"I ask thee again, if thou wouldest wish to be like him?" reiterated the duke.

"Yes, my lord," replied Beaumanoir.

"Well, then, Beaumanoir," said the duke, holding the dagger towards him by the point, "since thou wouldest be like him, thou must thrust out one of thine eyes."<sup>3</sup>

This malignant taunt on the personal defect of the constable, emanating, as it doubtless did, from the jealous ire that was boiling in his

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

breast. came with a worse grace from the ungrateful duke, since Clisson had lost his eye while fighting bravely in his cause at the battle of Auray. The lord de Beaumanoir, seeing from the expression of the duke's countenance that things were taking a bad turn, cast himself on his knee, and began to expostulate with him on the treachery of his conduct towards the constable and himself.

"Go, go!" interrupted the duke; "thou shalt have neither better nor worse than he." He then ordered Beaumanoir to be arrested,<sup>1</sup> dragged into another room, and loaded with fetters, his animosity against him almost equalling his hatred to Clisson.

The duke then called to him the *Sieur Bazvalen*, in whom he had the greatest confidence, and ordered him to put the constable to death at midnight, as privately as possible. *Bazvalen* represented in vain the perilous consequences that would ensue; but the duke said, "he had resolved upon it, and would be obeyed." During the night, however, his passion subsiding, he repented of having given such orders, and at daybreak sent for *Bazvalen*, and asked "if his directions had been obeyed?"<sup>2</sup> On being answered in the affirmative, he cried out, "How! is *Clisson* dead?"

"Yes, my lord, he was drowned last night,<sup>3</sup> and his body is buried in the garden," said *Bazvalen*.

"Alas!" replied the duke, "this is a most pitiful good-morrow. Be-gone, *Messire Jehan*, and never let me see you more!"

As soon as *Bazvalen* had retired, the duke abandoned himself to agonies of remorse; he groaned and cried aloud in his despair, till his squires, valets, and officers of the household, flew to his succour, supposing he was suffering intense bodily pain, but no one dared to speak to him, and he refused to receive food. *Bazvalen*, being informed of his state, returned to him, and said, "My lord, as I know the cause of your misery, I believe I can provide a remedy, since there is a cure for all things."

"Not for death," replied the duke.

*Bazvalen* then told him, that, foreseeing the consequences and the remorse he would feel if the blind dictates of his passion had been obeyed, he had not executed his commands, and that the constable was still alive.

"What, *Messire Jehan*! is he not dead?" exclaimed the duke, and, falling on *Bazvalen*'s neck, embraced him in an ecstasy of joy. The lord de Laval, then entering, renewed his supplications for the life of his brother-in-law *Clisson*, reminding the duke, in a very touching manner, of the early friendship that had subsisted between them when they were educated together in the same hotel with the duke of Lancaster, and what good service *Clisson* had since done him at the battle of Auray; and ended with imploring the duke to name any ransom he pleased for his intended victim.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.

<sup>2</sup> Dom Morice's History of Bretagne.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. A prisoner could be quietly drowned in his dungeon by letting in the waters of the moat.

<sup>4</sup> Froissart.

'This was touching the right string, for the fury of the duke abated, like that of "ancient Pistol," at the allusion to the crowns, and he named 100,000 florins, the strong town of Jugon, and several of the constable's castles, as the price of his relenting.

The lord de Laval then obtained an order from the duke for admittance to Clisson, for the gate of the keep was locked, and the keys were in the duke's chamber.<sup>1</sup> Clisson, who was fettered down to the floor in momentary expectation of death, felt his spirits revive at the sight of his faithful brother-in-law; and extravagant as the terms were which the duke of Bretagne had named, he offered no objection to them, verifying the Satanic aphorism, "that every thing a man hath he will give for his life."

Clisson and Beaumanoir were then released from their fetters. Wine and plenty of provisions were set before them, for it should seem they had kept fast as well as vigil in their dungeons in Ermine Castle, till the murderous ire of John the Valiant was overcome, partly by the remorseful feelings which had disturbed his mind, as soon as he supposed the crime had been perpetrated, and partly by the prospect of so much unexpected plunder as the florins, the castles, and the town, which had been guaranteed as the price of his relenting.

In four days' time the conditions were performed on the part of the constable by the lords de Laval and Beaumanoir. The duke of Bretagne was put into possession of the town of Jugon, the châteaux Broc, Joselin, and Le Blanc, and the hundred thousand florins were paid into his exchequer;<sup>2</sup> but, like most of the gains of iniquity, these acquisitions were of little ultimate advantage to the duke.

The arrest of the constable, though it only lasted for four days, had the effect of averting the threatened invasion from the shores of England. As he was the commander-in-chief of the expedition, the officers of the armament, some of whom had joined it reluctantly from the first, allowed their men to disband themselves; and, before their general was released from his perilous but brief captivity within the walls of Ermine, the whole force had melted away and dispersed.

Clisson carried his complaints to the court of France; and, while a general feeling of indignation was excited at the baseness of the duke of Bretagne's conduct on this occasion, there were not wanting those whose invidious feelings towards the innocent duchess led them to glance at her as the prompter of the deed, by recalling to the attention of the enemies of the house of Albret, how France had been once before agitated by the assassination of sir Charles d'Espaign, the then constable of France, by her father, the late king of Navarre.<sup>3</sup>

Several indignant remonstrances were addressed to the duke of Bretagne by the offended sovereign and regents of France; but, so far from making the slightest concession or reparation for the outrages of which he had been guilty, John the Valiant told the bishop of Langres, and the other envoys from the court of France, "that the only thing of which he repented was, that he had not slain the constable, when he

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



had him in his power.”<sup>1</sup> The duke’s insolent reply to the ambassadors was followed by a declaration of war from France. “He expected nothing less,” says Froissart, “but his hatred against Clisson was so great that it deprived him of the use of his reason.”<sup>2</sup> In fact, the frantic lengths to which this feeling carried him can only be accounted for on the grounds of the jealousy which the incendiary insinuations of the late king of Navarre had excited in his mind. The conduct of the duchess was, however, so prudent and irreproachable, that no part of these angry and suspicious feelings were directed against her. She appears, from first to last, to have enjoyed the undivided affection and esteem of her lord. During this stormy period, she continued to reside with him at the strong castle of De la Motte; but they seldom ventured beyond the walls of Vannes, for fear of ambuscades. The duke garrisoned and victualled the principal towns and castles in his dominions, and entered into a strict alliance with the young king of Navarre, Joanna’s brother, whom he promised to assist in recovering his Norman dominions, if he would unite with him and the English against the French.<sup>3</sup>

In the midst of these troubles, Joanna was delivered of her first-born child at the castle of Nantes,—a daughter, who was baptized by the bishop of Vannes, and received the name of Joanna.<sup>4</sup> The infant only survived a few months. The grief of the youthful duchess, for this bereavement, was at length mitigated by a second prospect of her bringing an heir to her childless lord’s dominions; but the anticipations of this joyful event were clouded by the gloomy aspect of the affairs of Bretagne, the duke having involved himself in a fearful predicament with France.

The council of the duke strongly urged the necessity of peace with France. Among other arguments, they represented the situation of the duchess, saying,—“Your lady is now far advanced in her pregnancy, and you should pay attention that she be not alarmed; and as to her brother, he can give you but little support, for he has enough to do himself.” The council concluded by imploring him to make peace with the lord of Clisson.

The duke was much struck, on hearing this reasoning, and remained some time leaning over a window that opened into a court. His council were standing behind him. After some musing, he turned round and said, “How can I ever love Oliver de Clisson, when the thing I most repent of in this world is not putting him to death, when I had him in my castle of Ermine?”<sup>5</sup>

Stubborn and headstrong as the duke was, the fear of agitating his young consort decided him, at last, to yield an ungracious submission to his suzerain. Accordingly he went to Paris, and performed his long withheld homage to Charles VI., and the feudal service of pouring water into a golden basin, and holding the napkin for the king to wash.<sup>6</sup> All

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Chron. de Bretagne.<sup>3</sup> Froissart.<sup>4</sup> Actes de Bretagne. Dom Morice. MSS. Ecclesiastical Chron. of Nantes.<sup>5</sup> Froissart.<sup>6</sup> Ibid. Chron. de Bretagne.

this was done with evident ill-will; but the French monarch and princes overlooked the manner of the duke, out of consideration for their kinswoman, the duchess Joanna, who, without taking any very decided part in politics, appears always to have used her influence for the purpose of conciliation. Few princesses could have been placed in a situation of greater difficulty than Joanna, while presiding over a court so torn with contending factions as that of Bretagne, as the consort of a prince old enough to have been her grandfather, and of so violent and irascible a temper that, from the time of their marriage, he was always involving himself and his dominions in some trouble or other. Yet the combative disposition of John the Valiant need scarcely excite our wonder, when we reflect on the history of his early life, and the stormy scenes in which his infancy and childhood were passed. He might have said with truth:—

“I was rocked in a buckler, and fed from a blade.”

More than once was he brought forth in his nurse's arms, amidst the tumult of battle, to encourage the partisans of his father's title to the dukedom of Bretagne, or placed in his cradle on the ramparts of Hennebion during the memorable defence of that place by his mother, Margaret of Flanders.

The violent temper of the duke appears to have been chiefly exercised on men; for, though he had three wives, he was tenderly beloved by them all.

In person this prince was a model of manly beauty. His portrait by the friar Jean Chaperon, in the church of the Cordeliers at Rennes, painted immediately after the decisive battle of Auray, which established his long-disputed claim to the throne of Bretagne, reminds us of the head of a youthful Apollo, so graceful and exquisitely proportioned are the features. He wears the crown and ermine mantle of Bretagne, with a small ruff, supported by a collar ornamented with gems, and clasped before with a jewel forming the centre of a rose. His favourite dog (perhaps, the faithless hound of oracular celebrity, which forsook the luckless Charles de Blois on the eve of the battle of Auray to fawn on him) is represented in the act of licking his shoulder.<sup>1</sup>

In the year 1388, Joanna brought an heir to Bretagne, who was baptized Pierre, but the duke afterwards changed his name to John.<sup>2</sup> This much-desired event was soon followed by the birth of the princess Marie. The duchess, whose children were born in very quick succession, was on the eve of her third confinement, when her lord's secret treaties with his old friend and brother-in-law, Richard II. of England, drew from the regents of France very stern remonstrances. An embassy extraordinary, headed by no less a person than the duc de Berri, was sent by the council to complain of his intelligence with the enemies of France, and to require him to renew his oath of allegiance as a vassal peer of that realm.

So far, however, was the duke of Bretagne from being impressed with

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.

<sup>2</sup> Dom Morice. Chron. de Bretagne.

the high rank and importance of these envoys, that, suspecting they intended to appeal to his nobles against his present line of conduct, he determined, in violation of those considerations which in all ages have rendered the persons of ambassadors sacred, to arrest them all, and keep them as hostages till he had made his own terms with France.<sup>1</sup> Le Moine de St. Denis, a contemporary historian, declares "he heard this from the very lips of the ambassadors, who related to him the peril from which they escaped, through the prudence of Joanna." Fortunately for all parties, it happened that her younger brother, Pierre of Navarre, was at the court of Nantes, and, being apprised of the duke's design, hastened to Joanna, whom he found at her toilet, and confided to her the alarming project then in agitation.

Joanna, who was then in hourly expectation of the birth of her fourth child, immediately perceived the dreadful consequences that would result from such an unheard-of outrage. She took her infants in her arms, and flew to the duke's apartment, half-dressed as she was, with her hair loose and dishevelled, and throwing herself at his feet, bathed in tears, conjured him, "for the sake of those tender pledges of their mutual love, to abandon the rash design that passion had inspired, which, if persisted in, must involve himself and all belonging to him in utter ruin."<sup>2</sup>

The duke, who had kept his design a secret from his wife, was surprised at the manner of her address. After an agitated pause, he said—"Lady, how you came by your information, I know not; but, rather than be the cause of such distress to you, I will revoke my order."<sup>3</sup> Joanna then prevailed on him to meet the ambassadors in the cathedral the next day, and afterwards to accompany them to Tours, where the king of France gave him a gracious reception, and induced him to renew his homage, by promising to unite his second daughter Joanna of France with the heir of Bretagne.

High feasts and rejoicings celebrated the reconciliation of the duke of Bretagne with the king of France, and the treaty for the marriage between their children. On this occasion, the choleric duke condescended, at the table of the king of France, to dine in company with his rival, John of Bretagne; but not even there would he meet sir Oliver Clisson,<sup>4</sup> so true is it that the aggressor is more difficult to conciliate than the injured party. This vindictive spirit on the part of the duke, next betrayed him into the dishonourable proceeding of extending his protection to sir Peter Craon, after a base attempt to assassinate the constable in the Place de St. Katherine.

The king of France was much exasperated, when he heard that Craon was sheltered by the duke of Bretagne, and wrote a peremptory demand for him to be given up to justice. The royal messengers found the duke at his castle of Ermine with his duchess, and were civilly entertained. The duke positively denied any knowledge of Craon; but the

<sup>1</sup> Dom Morice. Mezerai.

<sup>2</sup> Le Moine de St. Denis, p. 257. Actes de Bretagne. Mezerai. Dom Morice

<sup>3</sup> Argentre. Chronicles of Bretagne. Mezerai.

<sup>4</sup> Froissart

king, being persuaded to the contrary, once more prepared to invade the duchy, with the avowed intention of deposing John the Valiant, and making himself the guardian of the young heir of Bretagne, Joanna's eldest son. The duke was preserved from the ruin that threatened him by the alarming access of frenzy with which the king was seized, in the scorching plains of Mans.<sup>1</sup>

Meantime, sir Oliver Clisson raised a civil war in Bretagne, which greatly harassed the court. The duke lost all his ill-acquired gains, was forced to shut himself up in Vannes, with the duchess and their children, without venturing beyond the walls, as the warfare was of the most murderous nature, and quarter was given by neither party. Clisson had greatly the advantage in the contest, and, besides many important successes not necessary to record here, he twice captured all the gold and silver plate belonging to the duke and duchess, and many of their jewels and other precious effects, which enabled him to carry on the war against them; and, though the duke was the sovereign of the country, there was not a Breton knight, or squire, who would bear arms against Clisson. At length, Joanna, who was, in her quiet way, a much sounder politician than her lord, contrived to establish a sort of amicable understanding with some of the Breton nobles in the interest of Clisson. The viscount Rohan, her agent in this negotiation, was, at the same time, the son of her aunt, Jane of Navarre, and Clisson's son-in-law.

The duke of Bretagne had, at length, become aware of the difficulties that surrounded him. He felt that he was growing old, and that his children were very young, and, excepting the duke and duchess of Burgundy, there was not a friend in the world who would take care of his wife and her infants. As to the branch of Navarre from which the duchess sprang, the wicked acts of her father had made that family remarkably unpopular in France. Therefore, he feared that if the hatred of sir Oliver de Clisson and the count of Penthievres continued to be united against his house, his children and their mother would, in case of his decease, be left with many enemies.<sup>2</sup>

Having pondered these things in his mind, the duke, without asking advice from his council, called a secretary, to whom, on entering his chamber, he gave a large sheet of paper, and said, "Write down what I shall dictate." The secretary having made himself ready, the duke repeated every word that he was to write; and the letter was indited in the most friendly terms to Clisson, desiring him to devise some means for them to meet, when every thing should be settled most amicably. The letter was folded up in the presence alone of the duke and his secretary, and the duke, having sealed it with his own signet, called his most trusty varlet into the apartment, saying—

"Hasten to castle Josselin, and say boldly that I have sent thee to speak to my cousin, sir Oliver, the lord of Clisson. Thou wilt be introduced to him. Salute him from me. If he return the salute, give him this letter, and bring me back his answer, but on thy life tell no man." On the arrival of the varlet at castle Josselin, the lord de Clisson

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

examined the private signet of the duke, which he knew well, opened the letter, and read it two or three times over, and was much astonished at the friendly and affectionate terms in which it was compounded. After musing some time, he told the varlet he would consider his answer, and ordered him to be conducted to an apartment by himself. The attendants of the lord of Clisson were amazed at what they saw and heard, for never before had any one come from the duke of Bretagne, without being mured in the deepest dungeon.<sup>1</sup>

Clisson wrote, in return, that if the duke wished to see him, he must send his son as a pledge, who would be taken the greatest care of till his return. This letter was sealed and given to the varlet, who hastened back to the duke at Vannes. On receiving the letter from the lord of Clisson, he paused after reading it, then exclaimed—

“I will do it: for, since I mean to treat amicably with him, every cause of distrust must be removed.” He then said to the viscount Rohan, “Viscount, you and the lord de Monboucher shall carry my little son to the château Josselin, and bring back with you the lord de Clisson, for I am determined to make up our quarrel.” Some days, however, elapsed before the duchess could resolve to part with her boy. At length, her earnest desire of composing the strife overcame her maternal fears, and she permitted her kinsman, Rohan, to conduct the princely child to castle Josselin. When Clisson saw the boy, and perceived the confidence the duke had placed in him, he was much affected.

The result was, that he and the duke’s envoy set out together from castle Josselin, carrying the boy with them, for sir Oliver said — “He would give him back to his parents, as henceforth he should never distrust the duke, after the trial he had made of him.” Such generosity was shown on both sides, that it was no wonder a firm peace was the consequence. Sir Oliver dismounted at the convent of Dominicans, the place where the interview was appointed to take place. When the duke of Bretagne found that sir Oliver had brought back his son, he was highly delighted with his generosity and courtesy, and, hastening to the convent, shut himself up in a chamber with sir Oliver. Here they conversed some time; then they went privately down the garden, and entered a small boat that conveyed them to an empty ship anchored in the river, and, when at a distance from their people, they conferred for a long time. Their friends thought all the time they were conversing in the convent-chamber. When they had arranged all matters thus secretly, they called their boatman, who rowed them to the church of the Dominicans, which they entered by a private door through the garden and cloisters, the duke holding sir Oliver by the hand all the time. All who saw them thus were well pleased; indeed, the whole of Bretagne was made very happy when this peace was made public; but, owing to the extreme precautions of the duke, no one knew what passed during the conference on the river.

Such is the very interesting account given by Froissart, of the reconciliation of these two deadly enemies. The Breton chroniclers attribute

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<sup>1</sup> Froissart.

the pacification wholly to the influence of Joanna, an application having been made to her by viscount Rohan, the husband of her aunt, praying her good offices in mediating a peace between her lord and the rebel peers of Bretagne. In compliance with this request, she prevailed on the duke to raise the siege of Josselin, and to make those concessions to Clisson which produced the happy result of putting an end to the civil war.<sup>1</sup> Clisson agreed to pay ten thousand francs of gold to the duke, and, with the rest of the Breton barons, associated the duchess of Bretagne in the solemn oaths of homage which they renewed to their sovereign, on the 28th of December, 1393, at Nantes.<sup>2</sup>

In the same year proposals of marriage were made by Joanna's future husband, Henry of Lancaster, earl of Derby, to her niece, the young princess of Navarre, but the negotiation came to nothing.<sup>3</sup>

The following year, Marie of Bretagne, Joanna's eldest daughter, was contracted to the eldest son of this prince, (afterwards Henry V.) The duke of Bretagne engaged to give Marie one hundred and fifty thousand francs in gold for her portion. "The castle of Brest, though at that time in the possession of the English, was, at the especial desire of the duchess Joanna, appointed for the solemnisation of the nuptials, and the residence of the youthful pair; but after the cession of this important town had been guaranteed by Richard II., the king of France contrived to break the marriage, by inducing the heir of Alençon to offer to marry the princess, with a smaller dower than the heir of Lancaster was to have received with her."<sup>4</sup>

Marie was espoused to John of Alençon, June 26th, 1396, and a peculiar animosity always subsisted between her husband and the defrauded Henry of Monmouth. The heir of Bretagne was married to Joanna of France the same year. Previously to this ceremony, the young bridegroom received the sacrament of confirmation from Henry bishop of Vannes, and, according to the wish of his father, exchanged the name of Peter for that of John. The espousals were solemnised at the hôtel de St. Paul, by the archbishop of Rouen, in the presence of the king and queen of France, the queen of Sicily, the duke and duchess of Bretagne, and the dukes of Berri and Burgundy, Joanna's uncles.

The duke of Bretagne undertook a voyage to England, in 1398, to induce king Richard to restore to him the earldom of Richmond, which had been granted by Richard II. to his first queen, Anne of Bohemia, and, after her death, to Jane of Bretagne, the sister of the duke, who was married to Raoul Basset, an English knight. Richard II. restored the earldom to the duke, and gave him an acquittance of all his debts to him; and the duke did the same by him at Windsor, 23d of April, 1398. "It was time," says Dom Morice, with some *naïveté*, "that these princes should settle their accounts together, for the one was on the point of deposition, the other, of death."

It was in the following year that Joanna first became acquainted with her second husband, Henry of Bolingbroke, during the period of his

<sup>1</sup> Le Bault, Chron. de Briocense.

<sup>2</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*.

<sup>3</sup> Dom Morice.

<sup>4</sup> Actes de Bretagne.

banishment from his native land. Henry was not only one of the most accomplished warriors and statesmen of the age in which he lived, but remarkable for his fine person and graceful manners. The vindictive jealousy of his cousin, Richard II. of England, had pursued him to the court of France, and exerted itself successfully to break the matrimonial engagements, into which he was about to enter, with the lady Marie of Berri, the daughter of Charles VI.'s uncle. This princess was cousin-german to Joanna, and in all probability was the object of Henry's affection, if we may form conclusions, from the bitterness with which he ever appears to have recurred to Richard's arbitrary interference, for the prevention of this marriage.

Charles VI. of France, though he entertained a personal friendship for Henry, whom he regarded as an ill-treated man, had reluctantly requested him to withdraw from his court, as his residence there was displeasing to Richard II. Henry then turned his steps towards Bretagne; but, aware of the intimate connexion which subsisted between the duke and Richard, he paused at the castle of Blois, and sent one of the knights of his train forward to announce his approach to the court of Vannes, and to ascertain the nature of the reception the duke might be disposed to give him.

John the Valiant, according to Froissart, was piqued at the mistrust implied by this proceeding on the part of Henry; "for," says that historian, "he was much attached to him, having always loved the duke of Lancaster, his father, better than the other sons of Edward III. 'Why,' said he to the knight, 'has our nephew stopped on the road? It is foolish, for there is no knight whom I would so gladly see in Bretagne as my fair nephew, the earl of Derby. Let him come and find a hearty welcome!'"<sup>1</sup> When the earl of Derby received this message, he immediately set forward for the dominions of the duke of Bretagne. The duke of Bretagne<sup>2</sup> met the earl at Nantes, and received him and his company with great joy. It was on this occasion that Henry first saw, and, if the chronicles of Bretagne may be relied on, conceived that esteem for the duchess Joanna, which afterwards induced him to become a suitor for her hand. We find he was accustomed to call the duke of Bretagne "his good uncle," in memory of his first marriage with Mary of England;<sup>3</sup> and it is very probable that, in accordance with the manners of those times, he addressed the duchess Joanna, in courtesy, by the title of aunt. The archbishop of Canterbury accompanied Henry to the court of Bretagne incognito, having just arrived from England with an invitation to him from the Londoners and some of the nobles attached to his party, urging him to invade England, for the ostensible purpose of claiming his inheritance, the duchy of Lancaster.

Henry repeated this in confidence to the duke of Bretagne, and requested his advice. "Fair nephew," replied the duke, "the straightest road is the surest and best: you are in a perplexing situation, and ask advice—I would have you trust the Londoners. They are powerful, and will compel king Richard, who, I understand, has treated you un-

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.<sup>2</sup> Ibid.<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

justly, to do as they please. I will assist you with vessels, men-at-arms, and cross-bows. You shall be conveyed to the shores of England in my ships, and my people shall defend you from any perils you may encounter on the voyage."<sup>1</sup>

Whether Henry was indebted to the good offices of the duchess Joanna for this favourable reply from the duke, history has not recorded. But, as John the Valiant had hitherto been the fast friend, and, as far as his disaffected nobles would permit, the faithful ally of his royal brother-in-law, Richard II., and now that his suzerain, Charles VI. of France, was united in the closest bonds of amity with that prince, and the young heir of Bretagne was espoused to the sister of his queen, it must have been some very powerful influence, scarcely less indeed than the eloquence of a bosom counsellor, that could have induced him to furnish Richard's mortal foe with the means of invading England. The purveyances of "aspiring Lancaster" were, however, prepared at Vannes, and the duke of Bretagne came thither with his guest, when all things were ready for his departure.<sup>2</sup> Henry was conveyed by three of the duke's vessels of war, freighted with men-at-arms and cross-bows. This royal adventurer, the banished Lancaster, appears to have been the person who gave to the *myosotis arvensis*, or "forget-me-not," its emblematic and poetic meaning, by uniting it, at the period of his exile, on his collar of SS, with the initial letter of his *mot*, or watchword, "*Souveignez-vous de moy*;" thus rendering it the symbol of remembrance, and, like the subsequent fatal roses of York, Lancaster, and Stuart, the lily of Bourbon, and the violet of Napoleon, an historical flower. Poets and lovers have adopted the sentiment, which makes the blue *myosotis* plead the cause of the absent, by the eloquence of its popular name, "Forget-me-not." Few indeed of those who, at parting, exchange this simple touching appeal to memory are aware of the fact, that it was first used as such by a royal Plantagenet prince, who was, perhaps, indebted to the agency of this mystic blossom for the crown of England.<sup>3</sup> We know not if Henry of Lancaster presented a *myosotis* to the duchess of Bretagne, at his departure from the court of Vannes, but he afforded a convincing proof, that his fair hostess was not forgotten by him, when a proper season arrived for claiming her remembrance.

The assistance rendered by the duke of Bretagne to the future husband of his consort, was not the last important action of his life. He was, at that time, in declining health, and had once more involved himself in disputes with Clisson and his party. Clisson's daughter, Margaret, countess de Penthievres, being a woman of an ambitious and daring spirit, was perpetually urging her husband and father to set up the rival title of the house of Blois to the duchy of Bretagne, and is accused by Alain Bouchard, and other of the Breton chroniclers, of having hastened the death of John the Valiant, by poison or sorcery.

<sup>1</sup> Froissart.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Willement's Regal Heraldry, p. 42. Anstis's Order of the Garter, vol. ii p 117



The duke was carefully attended by Joanna in his dying illness. By a codicil to his last will and testament, which he had made during his late visit to England, he confirms her dower and all his former gifts to his beloved companion, the duchess Joanna,<sup>1</sup> whom, with his eldest son John, count de Montfort, the bishop of Nantes, and his cousin the lord Montauban, he nominates his executors. The document concludes with these words: "In the absence of others, and in the presence of our said companion the duchess, this codicil is signed, 26th day of October, 1399. Dictated by our said lord the duke from his sick bed, and given under his seal in the castle tower, near Nantes, about the hour of vespers, in the presence of the duchess; Gile, a knight; Master Robert Brocherol, and Joanna Chesnel, wife of Guidones de Rupeforte. Written by J. de Ripa, notary, at the castle at Nantes."<sup>2</sup>

On the 1st of November, 1399, the duke breathed his last; and Joanna having been appointed by him as regent for their eldest son, the young duke, with the entire care of his person, assumed the reins of government in his name.<sup>3</sup> Her first public act, after the funeral of her deceased lord had been solemnised in the cathedral church of Nantes, was a public reconciliation with sir Oliver Clisson, with his son-in-law, count de Penthièvres, and the rest of the disaffected nobles, who had been at open variance with her deceased lord.<sup>4</sup> She employed the prelates, and some of the most prudent of the nobles of Bretagne, to mediate this pacification; and, after many journeys and much negotiation, concessions were made on both sides, and Clisson, with the rest of the malcontents, swore to obey the widowed duchess, during the minority of their young duke, her son. This treaty was signed and sealed at the castle of Blein, January 1, 1400.<sup>5</sup> Clisson's power in the duchy was so great, owing to his vast possessions there, his great popularity, and his influence as constable of France, that he might have been a most formidable enemy to the young duke, if the duchess-regent had not taken such laudable pains to conciliate him.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the year 1395, a very rich addition to the dower of Joanna was assigned by the duke, her husband. Chron. de Bretagne. Dom Morice.

<sup>2</sup> Preuves Historiques.

<sup>3</sup> Actes de Bretagne.

<sup>4</sup> Chron. de Bretagne. Preuves Hist.

<sup>5</sup> Actes de Bretagne.

<sup>6</sup> Alain Bouchard gives a very interesting account of Clisson's conduct when tempted by his daughter Marguerite, the wife of the rival claimant of the duchy, to destroy the infant family of the late duke when the death of that prince had left their destinies, in a great measure, in his hands. Marguerite, having heard that the duke of Burgundy, the uncle of the duchess Joanna and the king of France, was likely to have the guardianship of the duchy and of the persons, of the princely minors, flew to the apartment of her father, exclaiming in great agitation—"My lord, my father! it now depends on you, if ever my husband recover his inheritance! We have such beautiful children, I beseech you to assist us for their sakes." "What is it you would have me do?" said Clisson. "Can you not slay the children of the false duke, before the duke of Burgundy can come to Bretagne?" replied she. "Ah, cruel and perverse woman!" exclaimed her father, with a burst of virtuous indignation; "if thou livest longer, thou wilt be the cause of involving thy children in infamy and ruin." And drawing his sword, in the first transports of his wrath he would have slain her on the spot,

When Joanna had exercised the sovereign authority as regent for her son a year and a half, the young duke, accompanied by her, made his solemn entrance into Rennes, March 22, 1401, and took the oaths in the presence of his prelates and nobles, having entered his twelfth year. He then proceeded to the cathedral, and, according to the custom of the dukes, his predecessors, passed the night in prayer before the great altar of St. Peter. On the morrow, having heard mass, he was knighted by Clisson, and then conferred knighthood on his younger brothers, Arthur and Jules; after which he was invested with the ducal habit, circle, and sword, by his prelates and nobles, and carried in procession through the city.

When the ecclesiastical ceremony was ended, the young duke mounted his horse, and, attended by his nobles, returned to the castle of Rennes, where a royal banquet had been prepared under the auspices of the duchess-regent.<sup>1</sup>

Joanna put her son in possession of the duchy at so tender an age, as a preliminary to her union with Henry IV., who had been in a great measure indebted to the good offices of her late lord for his elevation to the throne of England. Henry had been for some years a widower; his first wife was Mary de Bohun, the co-heiress of the earl of Hereford, lord-constable of England.<sup>2</sup>

Joanna, to whom the proposal of a union with this prince appears to have been peculiarly agreeable, being aware that a serious obstacle existed on the important subject of religion, kept the affair a profound secret, till she could obtain from the pope of Avignon a general dispensation to marry any one whom she pleased, within the fourth degree of consanguinity, without naming the person;<sup>3</sup> Henry (who had been educated in Wickliffite principles), being at that time attached to the party of Boniface, the pope of Rome, or the anti-pope, as he was styled by those who denied his authority.

if she had not fled precipitately from his presence. "She did not wholly escape punishment," adds the chronicler, "for in her fright she fell, and broke her thigh-bone, of which she was lame for the rest of her life."

<sup>1</sup> Alain Bouchard. Dom Morice.

<sup>2</sup> She was great-grand-daughter to Edward I., and Eleanor of Castille, and the richest heiress in England, excepting her sister, who was married to Henry's uncle, Gloucester. She had possessions to the amount of forty thousand nobles per annum, arising from several earldoms and baronies. She was devoted to a conventual life by her interested brother-in-law, who had her in wardship, but evaded that destiny by marrying Henry of Lancaster, who, by the contrivance of her aunt, carried her off from Pleshy, and married her, 1384. She died in the bloom of life in 1394, leaving six infants—namely, the renowned Henry V., Thomas duke of Clarence, John duke of Bedford, regent of France, and Humphrey duke of Gloucester, protector of England; Blanche, married to the count Palatine, and Philippa, to Eric, king of Denmark, the unworthy heir of Margaret Waldemar. It was from Mary Bohun that Henry derived his title of duke of Hereford. Though her decease happened so many years before his elevation to the royal dignity he caused masses to be said for the repose of her soul, under the title of queen Mary, by the monks of Sion Abbey, which he founded after he came to the throne of England.

<sup>3</sup> Lobineau. Preuves Hist. de Bretagne.

Joanna's agents negotiated this difficult arrangement so droitly, that the bull was executed, according to her desire, March 20, 1402, without the slightest suspicion being entertained, by the orthodox court of Avignon, that the schismatic king of England was the mysterious person, within the forbidden degrees of consanguinity, whom Benedict had so obligingly granted the duchess-dowager of Bretagne liberty to espouse.<sup>1</sup>

When Joanna had thus outwitted her pope, she despatched a trusty squire of her household, named Antoine Riczi, to conclude her treaty of marriage with king Henry. After the articles of this matrimonial alliance were signed, Joanna and her royal bridegroom were espoused, by procuration, at the palace of Eltham, on the third day of April, 1402, Antoine Riczi acting as the proxy of the bride.<sup>2</sup> What motive could have induced the lovely widow of John the Valiant of Bretagne to choose a male representative on this interesting occasion, it is difficult to say; but it is certain that Henry promised to take his august *fiancée* to wife in the person of the said Antoine Riczi, to whom he plighted his nuptial troth,<sup>3</sup> and on his finger he placed the bridal ring.<sup>4</sup> This act was performed with great solemnity in the presence of the archbishop of Canterbury, the king's half-brothers, the Beaufort princes, the earl of Worcester, lord-chamberlain of England, and other officers of state.<sup>5</sup>

Riczi had previously produced a letter from the duchess Joanna empowering him to contract matrimony with the king of England in her name; on which the trusty squire, having received king Henry's plight, pronounced that of Joanna in these words:—

"I, Antoine Riczi, in the person of my worshipful lady, dame Joanna, the daughter of Charles, lately king of Navarre, duchess of Bretagne, and countess of Richmond, take you, Henry of Lancaster, king of England and lord of Ireland, to my husband, and thereto I, Antoine, in the spirit of my said lady, plight you my troth."<sup>6</sup>

No sooner was this ceremony concluded than the rigid canonists represented to Joanna, that she would commit a deadly sin by completing her marriage with a prince attached to the communion of pope Boniface. The case, however, not being without precedent, the court of Avignon thought it better to quiet the conscience of the duchess, thinking it possible that great advantages might be derived from her forming an alliance with the king of England; whose religious principles had hitherto been any thing but stable.<sup>7</sup> She obtained, July 23, permission of her pope to live with the schismatic catholics, and even outwardly to conform to them by receiving the sacraments from their hands, provided that she remained firmly attached to the party of Benoit XIII.<sup>8</sup>

Meantime the court of France beheld with alarm the proceedings of the duchess, apprehending, and with reason, that it was her intention to carry her children with her to England, and to attach them to the interests of their royal step-father. The duke of Burgundy, who, at that

<sup>1</sup> Dom Morice.

<sup>2</sup> Dom Morice. Chron. de Bretagne.

<sup>3</sup> Lobineau.

<sup>4</sup> Acts of the Privy Council, by sir Harris Nicolas.

<sup>5</sup> Lobineau. Hist. de Bretagne.

<sup>6</sup> MS. Chron. of Nantes.

<sup>7</sup> Dom Morice.

<sup>8</sup> MS. Chron. of Nantes.

time, had the principal direction of the government of France, found that to counteract king Henry's policy, it would be necessary for him to go in person to Bretagne. He proceeded to Nantes on the 1st of October. The duchess, having heard of his arrival, invited him to dinner, and regaled him sumptuously. The duke, on his part, having prepared a treat of a more important kind for the duchess, presented her, at the conclusion of the repast, with a rich crown and a sceptre of crystal, and another of gold, ornamented with pearls and precious stones. He gave the young duke a buckle of gold, adorned with rubies and pearls, a beautiful diamond, and a number of silver vessels. To each of his little brothers, Arthur earl of Richmond, and count Jules of Bretagne, he presented a collar of gold, enriched with rubies and pearls. He gave the countess of Rohan, Joanna's aunt, a splendid diamond; and a buckle to each of her ladies and damsels who were present. The lords-in-waiting and officers of the duchess's household, were not forgotten in this magnificent distribution of largesses, in which the duke expended an immense sum.

These discreet gifts entirely gained the heart of the duchess, of the princes, her children, of her lords and officers, but, above all, of that most influential coterie, the ladies of her court and bedchamber. They were sure he would be the best person in the world to defend the rights and protect the person of their young duke, and to diffuse happiness and prosperity among his subjects; and they besought him to undertake the guardianship of the royal minors, and their patrimony.

The duke accepted this charge as the nearest relation of the children of his friend and kinsman, the late duke, and the uncle of the duchess, and swore upon the holy evangelists to preserve faithfully the laws, liberties, and privileges of the Bretons. The duchess, having been thoroughly persuaded how much better it would be, for the interests of her children to leave them under the care of this powerful protector, than to alienate the affections of the people of Bretagne, by taking them to England, subscribed to the treaty.<sup>1</sup>

After the duchess had confided the guardianship of her children to the duke of Burgundy, he departed from Nantes for Paris on the 3d of November, 1402, after a stay of two months, taking with him the young duke and his two brothers, Arthur and Jules. The duke was only in his thirteenth year, and the younger princes so small, that they could scarcely guide the horse on which they were mounted, one behind the other. They were conducted by the duke of Burgundy to Paris, where the young duke of Bretagne performed his homage to Charles VI. of France. Joanna had another son, named Richard, an infant, who is not mentioned in the Breton Chronicles as forming one of this party.<sup>2</sup>

One of Joanna's last actions as duchess of Bretagne was to secure to her aunt, Jane of Navarre, the wife of the Viscount Rohan, a pension of 1000*l.* per year, out of the rents of her dower city and county of Nantes. This deed, which is printed in the *Fœdera*, affords an interesting testi-

<sup>1</sup> Dom Morice. Chron. de Bretagne.

<sup>2</sup> Actes de Bretagne. Chron. Briocense. Dom Morice.

mony of Joanna's affection for her deceased lord, as she expressly states that this annuity is granted, not only in consideration of the nearness of kindred and friendship that is between her and her aunt, "but also for, and in remuneration of, the good pains and diligence she used to procure our marriage with our very dear and beloved lord (whom God assoile). Of which marriage it has pleased our Lord and Saviour, that we should continue a noble line, to the great profit of the country of Bretagne, in our very dear and beloved son, the duke of Bretagne, and our other children, sons and daughters. And for this, it was the will and pleasure of our said very dear and beloved lord, if he had had a longer life, to have bestowed many gifts and benefits on our said aunt, to aid her in her sustenance and provision."<sup>1</sup> This deed is executed at Vannes.

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## JOANNA OF NAVARRE,

### QUEEN OF HENRY IV.

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#### CHAPTER II.

Joanna assumes the title of queen—Writes to Henry IV.—Embarks for England—Her infants—Perils at sea—Lands at Falmouth—Married at Winchester—Nuptial feast—Honours paid to her by the Londoners—Historical picture of her coronation—Tournament—Her injunctions to her sons—King Henry's grants to Joanna—Arrival of her son Arthur—Joanna's foreign household—Queen's Breton servants dismissed—Income settled by parliament—Marriage of her two daughters—Peril from pirates—Unpopularity of Joanna—She mediates peace with Bretagne—Additions to her dower—Her monument to her first husband—Queen's lead mines—Her influence with the king—Sickness and death of king Henry—His will—Widowhood of Joanna—Respect paid to her by the new king—Her political influence—Capture of her son Arthur at Agincourt—Returns public thanks for the victory—Affecting interview between Joanna and her son—Joanna a lady of the Garter—Treachery of her confessor—Arrested at Havering Bower—Accused of sorcery—Goods and dower confiscated—Imprisoned at Leeds Castle—Removed to Pevensey—Her doleful captivity—Henry V.'s death-bed remorse—His letter of restitution—Her release—Petition to parliament—Restoration to her rank and possessions—Conflagration of her palace at Langley—Her death—Her children—Obsequies—Her tomb—Mysterious reports—Exhumation of the bodies of Henry IV. and Joanna.

JOANNA assumed the title of queen of England some months before her departure from Bretagne,<sup>2</sup> and she is mentioned as such in all contemporary documents. She appears to have exerted a sort of matrimonial influence with her royal bridegroom, soon after the ceremonial of their espousals had been performed by proxy; for we find that she wrote

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<sup>1</sup> Joanna's grant was confirmed by her betrothed husband, Henry IV. of England, to her aunt, under his great seal at Westminster, March 1st, 1402. Rymer's *Fœdera*.

<sup>2</sup> Dom Morice. Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. viii.

to Henry, in behalf of one of her countrymen, the master of a Navarrese wine-ship, who had been plundered of his cargo, in the reign of Richard II., by William Prince, a captain in the earl of Arundel's fleet. Her intercession proved effectual; for king Henry, as he expressly states, "at the request of his dearest consort, enjoins his admiral, Thomas Rampstone, to see that proper satisfaction be made to the master of the wine-ship, by the said William Prince."<sup>1</sup>

Previous to her departure from Bretagne, Joanna sold the government of her castle of Nantes to Clisson for twelve thousand crowns; and having only tarried to complete this arrangement, she, on the 20th of December, 1402, proceeded to Camaret with her two infant daughters, Blanche and Marguerite, their nurses, and a numerous train of Breton and Navarrese attendants.<sup>2</sup>

The English fleet, with the two half-brothers of her affianced bridegroom, the earl of Somerset and Henry Beaufort, bishop of Lincoln, with Thomas Percy, earl of Worcester, the lord-chamberlain of England,<sup>3</sup> had been waiting at that port a considerable time. Joanna, with her daughters and her retinue, embarked at Camaret, January 13th, in a vessel of war commanded by the young earl of Arundel.<sup>4</sup> The expedition sailed the same day with a favourable wind, but encountered a dreadful tempest at sea, by which the vessels were much damaged. After tossing five days and five nights on the wintry waves, Joanna and her children were driven on the coast of Cornwall; and instead of landing at Southampton, their original destination, they disembarked at Falmouth. From thence the illustrious travellers proceeded to Winchester, where king Henry was in waiting with his lords, to receive his long-expected bride. The nuptials between Joanna and Henry were publicly solemnised, February 7th, 1403, in that ancient royal city, in the church of St. Swithin, with great pomp.<sup>5</sup> The bridal feast was very costly, having two courses of fish, and, at the end of the second, panthers crowned were introduced for what was, in the quaint language of the times, called a "*sottiltie*," or banquet ornament of confectionary. Eagles, crowned, formed the *sottiltie*, at the end of the third course.<sup>6</sup>

Great preparations were made by the citizens of London to meet and welcome the newly-married consort of the sovereign of their choice, on her approach to the metropolis. Among other expenses for the civic procession ordained in her honour, the Grocers' Company allowed Robert Stiens, their beadle, 6s. 8d. for riding into Suffolk to hire minstrels; he engaged six—namely, a *panel mynstrale et ses rampagnons*, probably meaning companions. This Suffolk musical band was paid

<sup>1</sup> Rymer's Fœdera. Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Dom Morice.

<sup>3</sup> Rymer's Fœdera.

<sup>4</sup> He was the son of the brave Richard Fitzallan, lord-admiral of England, who was beheaded by Richard II. There is in the eighth volume of Rhymer a lively supplication from this nobleman to the king, "setting forth that he had provided, by the royal command, a ship well appointed with victuals, arms, and thirty-six mariners, for the service of bringing our lady the queen from Bretagne, and praying to be reimbursed from the exchequer for these expenses."

<sup>5</sup> Acts of Privy Council, by sir H. Nicolas, vol. i. p. 189. Breton Chronicles.

<sup>6</sup> Willement's Regal Heraldry, p. 31.

four pounds, for riding to Blackheath to meet the queen. The mayor, the aldermen, and sheriffs, went out in procession on this occasion, with the crafts in brown and blue, and every man a red hood on his head. Queen Joanna rested the first day at the Tower. That she went to Westminster in grand procession on the following, is ascertained by the entry for paying the said Suffolk minstrels 13s. 4d., on the morrow, when the queen passed through Cheapside to Westminster.<sup>1</sup>

There is an exquisite drawing in a contemporary manuscript,<sup>2</sup> illustrative of Joanna's coronation, which took place, February 26th, 1403, not quite three weeks after her bridal. She is there represented as a very majestic and graceful woman, in the meridian glory of her days, with a form of the most symmetrical proportions, and a countenance of equal beauty. Her attitude is that of easy dignity. She is depicted in her coronation robes, which are of a peculiarly elegant form. Her dalmatica differs little in fashion from that worn by our sovereign lady queen Victoria, at her inauguration. It partially displays her throat and bust, and is closed at the breast with a rich cordon and tassels. The mantle has apertures through which her arms are seen; they are bare, and very finely moulded. She is enthroned, not by the side of her royal husband, but with the same ceremonial honours that are paid to a queen-regnant, in a chair of state placed singly under a rich canopy, emblazoned, and elevated on a very high platform, of an hexagonal shape, approached on every side by six steps. Two archbishops have just crowned her, and are still supporting the royal diadem on her head. Her hair falls in rich curls on her bosom. In her right hand she holds a sceptre, and in her left an orb surmounted by a cross—a very unusual attribute for a queen-consort, as it is a symbol of sovereignty, and could only have been allowed to queen Joanna as a very especial mark of her royal bridegroom's favour.

In this picture, a peeress in her coronet and robes of state, probably occupying the office of mistress-of-the-robes, stands next the person of the queen, on her right hand, and just behind her are seen a group of noble maidens wearing wreaths of roses, like the train-bearers of her majesty queen Victoria; affording a curious but probably forgotten historical testimony, that such was the costume prescribed anciently, by the sumptuary regulations for the courtly demoiselles, who were appointed to the honour of bearing a queen of England's train at her coronation.

At this ceremonial, John lord de Latimer received forty marks, for release of the almoner's dish placed before queen Joanna, on the day of her coronation, he having the hereditary right of almoner on such occasions.<sup>3</sup>

Among other courtly pageants at queen Joanna's coronation, a tournament was held, in which Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, maintained the lists in honour of the royal bride. In the pictorial chronicles of the

<sup>1</sup> Herbert's History of the Livery Companies.

<sup>2</sup> Cottonian MS. Julius E. 4, folio 202. Stow's Annals.

<sup>3</sup> Issue Rolls, 297.

life and acts of this chivalric peer,<sup>1</sup> who was surnamed the Courteous, it is said that "he kept joust on the queen's part against all other comers, and so notably and knightly behaved himself, as redounded to his noble fame and perpetual worship."

This quaint sentence is in explanation of another historical drawing, in which "queen Jane," as she is there styled, is represented sitting in state with the king, attended by her ladies in an open gallery, beholding with evident satisfaction the prowess of her champion.

Instead of her royal robes, the queen is here represented in a gown fitting close to her shape, and has exchanged her crown, for one of the tofty Syrian caps, then the prevailing head-dress for ladies of rank in England, with its large, stiff, transparent veil, supported on a frame-work at least two feet in height.

The queen's ladies-in-waiting wear hoods and veils very gracefully draped, and by no means emulating the towering head-gear of their royal mistress.

King Henry is by queen Joanna's side, wearing a furred gown and velvet cap of maintenance, looped up with a *fleur-de-lis*. His appearance is that of a gallant gentleman in middle life. The balcony, in which the royal bride and bridegroom are seated, is not unlike the royal stand at Ascot, only more exposed to public view; and the king and queen are both accommodated with the luxury of large square cushions for their elbows, with tassels at the corners. King Henry sits quite at ease, resting his arms on his cushion, but the queen leans forward and extends her hands with a gesture of great animation, as she looks down on the contest. Warwick has just struck his opponent. He wears the bear and ragged staff on his helmet. This historical sketch, besides its great beauty, is very valuable for its delineation of costume.

Joanna of Navarre was the first widow, since the Norman conquest, who wore the crown-matrimonial of England. She was, as we have seen, the mother of a large family. Her age, at the period of her second nuptials, must have been about three-and-thirty; and if past the morning freshness of her charms, her personal attractions were still very considerable. Her monumental effigy represents her as a model of feminine loveliness. Her exemplary conduct as the wife of the most irascible prince in Christendom, and the excellence of her government as regent for her eldest son, had afforded unquestionable evidence of the prudence and wisdom of this princess; and she was in possession of a very fine dower; yet the marriage was never popular in England.

It has been asserted, by many historians, that Henry IV. married the duchess-dowager of Bretagne, chiefly with the view of directing the councils of the young duke her son. If such were his motives, they were completely frustrated by the maternal feelings of Joanna, who, nobly consulting the welfare of her son, and the wishes of his subjects, rather than the interests of her second husband, placed her children, as we have seen, under the protection of the duke of Burgundy, previously

<sup>1</sup>Cottonian MS. Julius E. 4, folio 202, mentioned p. 77; it is usually called the Beauchamp MS., and is one of the most precious relics in the British Museum.



to her departure from Bretagne; and even after her coronation as queen of England, we find, by her letters dated Westminster, March 9th, 1403, that she confirms her last act as duchess-regent of Bretagne by solemnly appointing "her well-beloved uncle, the duke of Burgundy, the guardian of her sons—John, duke of Bretagne, Arthur, and Jules—and enjoins those young princes to be obedient to him, and to attend diligently to his advice."<sup>1</sup>

The bridal festivities of Henry IV. and his new queen were soon interrupted, by the news of a descent of the French, on the Isle of Wight; but the inhabitants compelled the invaders to retire to their ships with dishonour. Next the Breton fleet, being wholly under the direction of the court of France, put to sea and committed great depredations on the coast of Cornwall, and on the merchant shipping, causing much uneasiness to the king, and rendering the new queen distasteful to the nation.

The memorable Percy rebellion occurred in the same year; and it has been said that this was fomented by the earl of Worcester, in consequence of a disagreement between him and queen Joanna during her voyage from Bretagne. This might possibly have originated in some dispute with Joanna's natural brother, Charles of Navarre, who accompanied her to England in the capacity of chamberlain to herself.<sup>2</sup> Be this as it may, it is almost certain that the battle of Shrewsbury might have been prevented, if Worcester, who was employed by the insurgent lords to negotiate a pacification with Henry, had fairly and honestly stated the concessions the king was willing to make; but he did not, and his own ruin, with that of his whole house, was the result.<sup>3</sup> Part of the confiscated property of the Percys, especially the earl of Northumberland's mansion in Aldgate, was granted to queen Joanna by the king.

In the year 1404, Henry IV. granted to queen Joanna the new tower, at the entrance of the great portals of his large hall, against the palace of Westminster, adjacent to the king's treasury, for her to hold her councils, and for the negotiation of her affairs; also, for her to hold her audiences, for charters and writings therein; the queen to hold the same, for the term of her natural life, having free ingress and egress for herself and officers to the said tower.<sup>4</sup>

In the month of February, 1404, Joanna enjoyed the happiness of welcoming her second son, Arthur of Bretagne, to England, king Henry having been prevailed upon by her solicitations to bestow upon him the

<sup>1</sup> Chron. de Bretagne.

<sup>2</sup> Chron. de Bretagne.

<sup>3</sup> A determined set was made against the life of the newly wedded king, at the battle of Shrewsbury, by a certain number of champions among the insurgents, who had vowed to have his blood. This confederacy being suspected by Henry's partisans, thirteen stout gentlemen arrayed themselves in dresses similar to that which he was accustomed to wear, and were slain in different parts of the field. Henry killed no less than sixteen of his assailants, with his own hand, in self-defence that day, and, like his son, the prince of Wales, performed prodigies of valour.

<sup>4</sup> Rymer's Fœdera.

earldom of Richmond. This was the appanage of his elder brother; but as the performance of personal homage to the king of England was an indispensable condition, to the investiture of a duke of Bretagne with this earldom, and Joanna's eldest son was entirely under the tutelage of the king of France, Henry's mortal foe, it would have been fruitless to demand liegeman's service of him; therefore the summons was, at Joanna's request, addressed to her second son, count Arthur.<sup>1</sup>

Joanna's happiness in this reunion was interrupted by the arrival of an envoy from her eldest son, the reigning duke, to demand the princesses Blanche and Marguerite, who resided with her in England. No offspring from her second marriage having been born, to divide with those beloved little ones the powerful affection, with which the heart of the royal mother clung to her little ones, she could not for a time be prevailed upon to resign them, even when reminded that they were the property of Bretagne.<sup>2</sup>

Her son, the duke of Bretagne, was so completely under the control of the father of his duchess, Charles VI., that he was compelled to espouse his quarrel against king Henry; and the French party in his dominions would have confiscated Joanna's rich dower, had she not vested the payment of it in the hands of several powerful nobles, her fast friends;<sup>3</sup> and she had her own officers, through whom she received her revenues.<sup>4</sup>

That she was satisfied with the conduct of her eldest son may be gathered from the fact that she presented him, on the 18th of November, 1404, with the sum of seventy thousand livres, that were due to her from her brother, the king of Navarre, and six thousand livres of her rents in Normandy. Her gifts must have been very acceptable to the young duke; for, though residing in the ducal palace, and nominally exercising the sovereign authority, his finances were so closely controlled by the court of France, that he had not the power of giving away more than one hundred sols, without the approbation of his chancellor, and other officers appointed by the duke of Burgundy.<sup>5</sup>

At the commencement of the year 1405, king Henry, as he expressly states, "at the mediation and earnest solicitation of his beloved consort, queen Joanna, forgave and liberated, without ransom, all the prisoners taken in arms against him at Dartmouth by John Cornwal." This natural exercise of conjugal influence in behalf of her former subjects, the piratical Bretons, increased the unpopularity, in which the queen had involved both herself and her royal husband, by filling their palaces with a household made up of foreigners. A more fatal error can scarcely be committed by female royalty in a country so constitutionally jealous and full of national pride as England.

The parliamentary records of the same year testify, "that great discontents were engendered in the minds of all classes of men, on account

<sup>1</sup> Le Moine de St. Dennis; Dom Morice.

<sup>2</sup> Dom Morice's Chron. de Bretagne.

<sup>3</sup> Chron. de Bretagne.

<sup>4</sup> Rymer's Fœdera, vol. viii. These were Breton prisoners.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Chron. de Bretagne.

of the influx of foreigners, which the king's late marriage had introduced into the realm; the disorderly state of the royal household; and the evil influence exercised over public affairs by certain individuals supposed to be about the persons of the king and queen."

These grievances, as they were considered, attracting the attention of parliament, the commons, with the consent of the lords, proceeded to reform the royal household; and, as a preliminary step to their regulations, they required that four persons should be removed out of the king's house; viz. the king's confessor, the abbot of Dore, with Derham and Crosbie, gentlemen of his chamber.

Henry, remembering full well that his title to the crown was derived from the voice of the people, far from testifying resentment at the interference of that hitherto disregarded branch of the legislature of England, the commons, summoned the inimical members of his household to attend him in parliament, February 9th, 1404, which they did, with the exception of the abbot of Dore. The king then, in his speech from the throne,<sup>1</sup> said, "That he neither knew nor could imagine any particular cause or reason, why the accused ought to be removed out of his household; nevertheless, as the lords and commons thought proper to have it so, considering it to be for the good of the realm, and most profitable to himself, to conform himself to their wishes, he would discharge them from his household forthwith." "Our sovereign lord," continues the record, "said further, 'That he would do as much by any who were about his royal person, if they should incur the hatred and indignation of his people.'"

The commons next appointed a committee of lords, February 22, to make further regulations and alterations in the appointments of the royal household, especially in those connected with the queen, when it was resolved, "That all French persons, Bretons, Lombards, Italians, and Navarrese, whatsoever, be removed out of the palace from the king and queen, except the queen's two daughters, Maria St. Parensy, Nicholas Alderwyche, and John Purian, and their wives.<sup>2</sup> This was complied with by Henry, and put into execution that very day; and we do not find that the queen Joanna offered any resistance to the wishes of the subjects and counsellors of her royal husband; but the lords agreed to indulge her with a Breton cook, two knights, a damsel, two chambermaids, one mistress, two esquires, one nurse, and one chambermaid for the queen's daughters, and a messenger to wait on them at certain times. In addition to these persons, Joanna retained eleven Breton lavenderers or washerwomen, and a varlet-lavenderer, or washerwoman's assistant.<sup>3</sup>

Much wiser would it have been of Joanna, if she had taken example by the politic condescension of the king to the wishes of their subjects, and yielded an unconditional assent to the dismissal of her foreign attendants, since the retention of her Breton cook, chambermaids,

<sup>1</sup> The substance of Henry's patriotic declaration is abstracted from the Rolls of Parliament, 5th of Henry IV. See also Guthrie's folio Hist. of England, vol. ii. and Parl. Hist., vol. ii.

<sup>2</sup> Parliamentary Rolls, 5th of Henry IV., p. 572; Parliamentary Hist.

<sup>3</sup> Parliamentary Rolls, 4th of Henry IV., p. 572.

washerwomen, &c., offered a pretence for a second interference from parliament.<sup>1</sup>

In this year the commons presented a petition to the king, praying, among other things, "that the queen would be pleased to pay for her journeys to the king's houses, as queen Philippa had been used to do." Joanna had no settled revenue as queen of England at the time when this implied remonstrance was made by the commons to king Henry, who was himself in the most urgent want of money, harassed with perpetual rebellions, especially in Wales, and without means to pay his mutinous and discontented troops their wages. "Every source of revenue," says sir Harris Nicolas, in his luminous preface to the "Acts of the Privy Council," "had been anticipated, and it is scarcely possible to imagine a government in greater distress for money than that of Henry IV. at that moment." If Joanna had not been in the receipt of a splendid dower as duchess-dowager of Bretagne, she would have found herself involved in the most embarrassing straits, as the consort of so impoverished a king as Henry.

But pecuniary cares and popular discontents were not the only troubles, that disturbed the wedded life of Joanna of Navarre, who, though no longer young, was still sufficiently charming to become the theme of the following amatory stanzas from no meaner a pen than that of a royal Plantagenet poet, Edward, duke of York, cousin-german to king Henry :—

"Excellent sovereign, seemly to see,  
Proved prudence, peerless of price;  
Bright blossom of benignity,  
Of figure fairest, and freshest of days.

I recommend me to your royalness  
As lowly as I can or may;  
Beseeching inwardly your gentleness,  
Let never faint heart love betray.

Your womanly beauty delicious  
Hath me all bent unto its chain;  
But grant to me your love gracious,  
My heart will melt as snow in rain.

If ye but wist my life, and knew  
Of all the pains that I y-feel,  
I wis ye would upon me rue,  
Although your heart were made of steel.

And though ye be of high renown,  
Let mercy rule your heart so free;  
From you, lady, this is my boon,  
To grant me grace in some degree.

To mercy if ye will me take,  
If such your will be for to do;  
Then would I truly for my sake  
Change my cheer, and shake my woe."

The arrest of the duke of York, who, after a series of loyal and valiant services to king Henry, was, on a very frivolous pretence, committed to a rigorous imprisonment in Pevensey castle, is possibly no less attributable to the personal jealousy of the king, than the outrageous conduct of Joanna's first husband, the duke of Bretagne, towards his old friend Clisson, was to the same baleful passion.

The virtuous and matronly deportment of Joanna, however, both as duchess of Bretagne and queen of England, were such as to prevent the slightest shade of suspicion from resting on her conduct. Whatever

<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary History, vol. ii.

<sup>2</sup> Walpole declares there is no doubt, that the verses are by the duke of York; and as they are addressed to the queen of England, there was no other at that time but Joanna of Navarre.

might have been the offence of the duke of York, Henry's displeasure was but temporary, for, in the course of three months, he was released, and restored to his old employments.<sup>1</sup>

The year 1406 commenced with fresh remonstrances from parliament, on the subject of Joanna's foreign attendants. The commons having now assumed a decided voice in the legislation of England, John Tiptoft, the speaker, in his celebrated address for liberty of speaking, took occasion to comment on the disorderly state of the royal household, remarking, at the same time, "that the order of that house for removing aliens from the queen's court had been very ill observed." It was, on this, resolved by unanimous consent, "That certain strangers there enumerated, who did seem to be officers about the queen, should by a certain day depart the realm." Whereupon a writ to proclaim the same was directed to the sheriffs of London, the aliens being charged, withal, to bring in all patents of lands and annuities granted them by the king or queen.<sup>2</sup>

The parliament also took the liberty of recommending the sovereign to observe the strictest economy in his household. Henry received this advice very graciously, and promised to retrench all superfluous expenses, and restricted the expenditure of his establishment to 10,000*l.* a year. He likewise declared his wish for the reformation of all abuses, and requested the parliament to take order for the payment of the debts of his household, and to grant a suitable income to his queen, for the maintenance of her state.<sup>3</sup> The request for the dower of queen Joanna was presented by John Tiptoft the speaker, and others of the commons; and by vote of this parliament she was endowed with all the revenues enjoyed by Anne of Bohemia, the first queen of Richard II., to the value of ten thousand marks per annum; so that with wards, marriages, and other contingencies, her income was equal to that of any previous queen of England.<sup>4</sup>

King Henry granted a safe-conduct, January 4th, 1406, to John de Boyas, "the secretary of his dear and royal consort Johane, to enable her to negotiate certain matters in Bretagne with regard to her dower there; also, for him to bring horses and other things for her use, provided nothing be attempted to the prejudice of the people and crown of England." Henry, at the same time, granted letters of protection to the masters of two ships from Bretagne, bringing lamps and other articles for the use of the queen.<sup>5</sup>

This year, Henry's youngest daughter, the princess Philippa, was married to Eric, king of Sweden and Denmark. About the same period, Joanna was compelled to resign her two youngest daughters, Blanche

<sup>1</sup> The duke of York's ostensible crime was a supposed participation in the abduction of the heirs of Mortimer; but that he had never failed in his loyalty to the house of Lancaster was proved by Henry prince of Wales falling on his knees in parliament, and declaring that his life, and all his army in Wales, had been saved by the gallantry and wisdom of York. (Tyler's Henry V.)

<sup>2</sup> Parliamentary Rolls, 5th and 6th of Henry IV.

<sup>3</sup> Parliamentary Rolls, 5th and 6th of Henry IV.

<sup>4</sup> Parliamentary Rolls, 6th of Henry IV.

<sup>5</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*.

and Marguerite of Bretagne, to the repeated importunities of the duke, their eldest brother, that prince having concluded marriages for both, which he considered would greatly strengthen his interests.<sup>1</sup>

After the departure of her daughters, queen Joanna retired with the king to her jointure palace, Leeds Castle, in Kent, to avoid the infection of the plague, which raged so dreadfully in London that 30,000 people fell victims to its fury. After spending the greater part of the summer at Leeds, the king and queen, designing to visit Norfolk, or, as some say, Pleshy in Essex, embarked at Queenborough in the Isle of Sheppy, with the intention of going by sea. The royal vessel was followed by four others, with the attendants and baggage, when they were suddenly attacked by pirates, lying in wait for them at the Nore; they took four of the king's ships, and carried away Sir Thomas Rampstone, the vice-chamberlain, with all the king's furniture, plate, and wearing apparel. The king himself had a very narrow escape of falling into the hands of those bold adventurers.<sup>2</sup>

Notwithstanding her unpopularity with the English, Joanna took infinite pains to promote a good understanding between her husband and the duke her son. Henry, in his letters to the duke of Bretagne, May 1407, addresses him as "his dearest son," and expresses "his earnest wish, on account of the close tie existing between them through his dearest consort, that peace and amity may be established to prevent the effusion of Christian blood."<sup>3</sup> The duke in reply says, "As our dearest mother, the queen of England, has several times signified her wish that all good friendship should subsist between our very redoubted lord and father, Henry king of England and lord of Ireland, her lord and spouse, on one part, and ourselves on the other, we desire to enter into an amicable treaty."<sup>4</sup>

Accordingly, a truce between England and Bretagne was, through the mediation of Joanna, proclaimed on the 13th of September, 1407.<sup>5</sup> The town of Hereford was added to the queen's dower by king Henry the same year; and she was, with his sons, the prince of Wales, Thomas, John, and Humphrey, recommended by him to the parliament for further pecuniary grants.<sup>6</sup>

An interesting proof of Joanna's respect for the memory of her first lord, the husband of her youth and the father of her children, is to be found in one of the royal briefs in the *Fœdera*, dated February 24th, 1408, in which king Henry says, "At the request of our dearest consort, an alabaster tomb has been made for the defunct duke of Bretagne.

<sup>1</sup> Blanche was married at twelve years old to the viscount Lomagne, eldest son of Bernard count of Armagnac, June 30, 1406. The following year, Marguerite was espoused to Alan de Rohan, count of Poerhaet, the grandson of sir Oliver Clisson; she died suddenly on the day of the marriage, June 26, 1407. It was suspected afterwards, that both these princesses were poisoned. The prior of Jocelin and a priest of Nantes were accused of this crime, and imprisoned; but nothing decisive could be proved. — MS. Ecclesiastical Chronicles of Nantes. *Actes de Bretagne*. Dom Morice. *Chron. de Bretagne*.

<sup>2</sup> Hall. Speed. Stow.

<sup>3</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Parliamentary History.

formerly her husband, to be conveyed in the barge of St. Nicholas of Nantes to Bretagne, with three of our English lieges, the same who made the tomb—viz: Thomas Colyn, Thomas Holewell, and Thomas Poppeham, to place the said tomb in the church of Nantes, John Guye-harde, the master of the said barge, and ten mariners of Bretagne; and the said barge is to be considered by the English merchants under our especial protection.”<sup>1</sup>

There is a fine engraving of this early specimen of English sculpture in the second volume of Dom Morice’s *Chronicles of Bretagne*. It bears the recumbent figure of the warlike John de Montfort, duke of Bretagne, armed cap-à-pie, according to the fashion of the times.

Henry IV. granted to Joanna six lead mines in England, with workmen and deputies to load her ship; and this he notified to her son the duke of Bretagne, in 1409, as these mines had been accustomed to export ore to Bretagne, and he wished the duke to remit the impost for the time to come. The king and queen kept their Christmas court this year at Eltham, which seems to have been a favourite abode with the royal pair.<sup>2</sup>

In the summer of 1412, Joanna received a visit from her third son, count Jules of Bretagne. Henry granted a safe-conduct for him and his retinue, consisting of twenty persons, with horses and arms; but there was a provision, “that no banished person be brought into England in the prince’s train, to the injury and peril of the realm.”<sup>3</sup> The young prince only came to England to die. He was lord of Chantoce.

At the close of the parliament the same year, the speaker of the commons once more recommended to the king, “the persons of the queen and the princes his sons, praying the advancement of their estates.” The petition was quite unreasonable as regarded queen Joanna, who enjoyed so large an income as queen of England, besides her rich dower from the states of Bretagne; but she never omitted an opportunity of adding to her wealth, which must have been very considerable.

Avarice was certainly the besetting sin of Joanna of Navarre; and this sordid propensity probably originated from the pressure of pecuniary cares with which she had had to contend as princess of Navarre, as duchess of Bretagne, and during the first years of her marriage with king Henry. Her conduct as a step-mother appears to have been conciliating. Even when the wild and profligate conduct of the heir of England had estranged him from his father’s councils and affections, such confidential feelings subsisted between young Henry and Joanna, that he employed her influence for the purpose of obtaining the king’s consent to the marriage of the young earl of March, at that time ward to the prince. To the disgrace of the queen, however, it is recorded, by the indubitable evidence of the *Issue Rolls*, that she received, as the price of her good offices on this occasion, a promissory bribe from the prince, as the following entries testify:—

“To Joanna queen of England. In money paid to her by the hands

<sup>1</sup> Rymer’s *Fœdera*.

<sup>2</sup> Stow.

<sup>3</sup> Rymer.

of Parnelle Brocket and Nicholas Alderwych,<sup>1</sup> in part payment of a *greater sum* due to the said queen upon a private agreement made between the said queen and our present lord the king, especially concerning the marriage of the earl of March, purchased and obtained of the said lady the queen, by our said now lord the king, whilst he was prince of Wales.

“By writ privy seal, 100l.”<sup>2</sup>

“To Joan, queen of England. In money paid to the said queen by the hands of Robert Okeburn, in part payment of a certain *greater sum* agreed upon between our said lord the king, whilst he was prince, and the said queen, for the marriage of the earl of March.

“By writ, 100l.”<sup>3</sup>

When we consider, that in point of legitimate descent the earl of March was the rightful sovereign of England, it is surprising how such a measure was ever advocated by the Lancastrian prince of Wales, or permitted by so profound a politician as his father, who must have been aware of the perilous consequences to his descendants; and it is a proof that the queen must have possessed an unbounded ascendancy over the mind of Henry IV. to be able to carry that point.

Henry IV., at that time sinking under a complication of infirmities, was probably indebted to the cherishing care of his consort for all the comfort he was capable of enjoying in life; and Joanna, who had learned so well how to adapt herself, while in early youth, to the wayward humours of her first husband (the most quarrelsome prince in Europe), was doubtless an adept in the art of pleasing, and of governing, without appearing to do so.

Henry, though only in his forty-seventh year, was worn out with bodily and mental sufferings. His features, once so regularly beautiful, and of which he, in some of his penitentiary observations, acknowledges himself to have been so proud,<sup>4</sup> became, in the autumn of this year, so marred and disfigured by that loathsome disease, the leprosy, as to prevent him from appearing in public.<sup>5</sup> On account of this mortal sickness, he kept his last Christmas at Eltham with his queen, in great seclusion. His complaint was accompanied by epileptic fits, or death-like trances, in which he sometimes lay for hours, without testifying any signs of life. He, however, rallied a little towards the close of the holydays, and was enabled after Candlemas to keep his birthday, and to

<sup>1</sup> This Nicholas Alderwych was one of queen Joanna's Bretagne attendants, whom she persisted in retaining at the time when the aliens were dismissed from the royal household by vote of parliament.

<sup>2</sup> Issue Rolls, 1st year of Henry V., p. 325.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. 329.

<sup>4</sup> Hardyng's Chronicle.

<sup>5</sup> If we may trust the witness of Maydstone, a priestly historian devoted to the cause of Richard II., Henry IV. was smitten with the leprosy as with a blight, on the very day Scroope, archbishop of York, was executed for treason without benefit of clergy. The extreme anxiety of his mind, at that crisis, had probably given a complete revulsion to his constitution.



return to his palace at Westminster. He was at his devotions, before the shrine of St. Edward, in the abbey, when his last fatal stroke of apoplexy seized him, and it was supposed by every one that he was dead; but being removed to the abbot's state apartments in the abbey, which were nearer than his own, and laid on a pallet before the fire, he revived, and asked, "where he was." He was told, "in the Jerusalem Chamber." Henry received this answer as his knell; for it had been predicted of him that he should die in Jerusalem, which he supposed to be the holy city, and had solemnly received the cross, in token that it was his intention to undertake a crusade for the expiation of his sins. The blood he had shed in supporting his title to the throne pressed very heavily on his conscience during the latter years of his reign, and in the hour of his departure he particularly requested that the *miserere* should be read to him, which contained a penitential acknowledgment of sin, and a supplication to be delivered from "blood-guiltiness." He then called for his eldest son, Henry prince of Wales, to whom he addressed some admirable exhortations as to his future life and government. Shakspeare has repeated almost verbatim the death-bed eloquence of the expiring king, in that touching speech, commencing, "Come hither, Henry, sit thou on my bed," &c.<sup>1</sup>

King Henry was, doubtless, arrayed in his regal robes and diadem while publicly performing his devotions at the shrine of the royal saint, his popular predecessor; which accounts for the crown having been placed on his pillow, whence it was removed by his son Henry, prince of Wales, during the long death-like swoon which deceived all present into the belief that the vital spark was extinct.

Of the many historians who have recorded the interesting death-scene of Henry IV., not one has mentioned his consort, queen Joanna, as being present on that occasion.

King Henry's will, which was made three years before his death, bears testimony to the deep remorse and self-condemnation which accompanied him to the grave. This curious document, a copy of which was discovered by sir Simon d'Ewes,<sup>2</sup> after diligent search, is as follows :

"I, Henry, sinful wretch, by the grace of God king of England and of France, and lord of Ireland, being in mine whole mind, make my testament in manner and form that ensueth. First, I bequeath to Almighty God my sinful soul, the which had never been worthy to be made man, but through his mercy and his grace, which life I have mispende, whereof I put me wholly at his grace and mercy with all mine heart. And at what time it liketh him of his mercy to take me, my body to be buried in the church of Canterbury, after the discretion of my cousin the archbishop. And I also thank my lords and true people for the true service they have done to me, and I ask their forgiveness if I have misintreated them in anywise; and as far as they have offended me in anywise, I pray God to forgive them it, and I do. And I will

<sup>1</sup> Second Part of Henry IV., Act 5th.

<sup>2</sup> This was perhaps a codicil, for it differs from a will quoted in Rymer.

that my queen be endowed of the duchy of Lancaster." He leaves Henry V. his sole executor.

"The words," says Hardyng, "which the king said at his death were of high complaint, but nought of repentance or restoration of the right heirs of the crown."

Henry expired on St. Cuthbert's day, March 19th, 1413. He was buried by the side of Edward the Black Prince, with great pomp and state, Henry V. and all his nobility being present, upon Trinity Sunday next following the day of his death.

In the first years of her widowhood, queen Joanna received every mark of attention and respect from the new king, Henry V., who was anxious to avail himself of her good offices with her son, the duke of Bretagne, in order to secure the alliance of that prince in his projected wars with France. Henry V., in his letters and treaties, always styles the duke of Bretagne his dearest brother, and the duke reciprocates the title when addressing him.<sup>1</sup> Joanna certainly exerted her influence with her son, in order to induce him to enter into amicable arrangements with England.<sup>2</sup>

According to some historians, Joanna was entrusted by her royal step-son with a share in the government, when he undertook his expedition against France. Speed, Stow, Hall, and Goodwin, and even that most industrious antiquary, White Kennet, affirm that she was made queen-regent, at the same time that John, duke of Bedford, was appointed protector and lord-lieutenant of England;<sup>3</sup> and this assertion is to strengthen Trussel's text, who uses these words:—"Henry appointed his mother-in-law, Joan de Navar, a woman of great prudence and judgment in national affairs, to be regent in his absence, with the advice of the privy council." But, notwithstanding these important authorities, there is no documentary evidence proving that such was the fact. She was, however, treated with higher consideration than was ever shown to a queen-dowager of this country, who was not also queen-mother, and appears to have enjoyed the favour and confidence of the king in no slight degree.

The same day that Henry quitted his metropolis, June 18th, after having been in solemn procession to St. Paul's with the lord-mayor and corporation of the city of London, to offer his prayers and oblations for the success of his expedition, he returned to Westminster, for the purpose of taking a personal leave of queen Joanna.<sup>4</sup> This circumstance is commemorated in a curious poem of the time:<sup>5</sup>—

<sup>1</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*.

<sup>2</sup> It is probable that it was on account of the duke's change of politics that the quarrel between him and his young duchess, the daughter of the king of France, took place, which ended in his beating his high-born consort. It was on this occasion that the duke of Orleans, who had espoused Isabel, the virgin widow of Richard II., the eldest sister of the duchess, told him "that the lion in his heart was not bigger than that of a child of a year old."—*Monstrelet*.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. i. p. 312.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Harris Nicolas' *Agincourt*, p. 24.

<sup>5</sup> Preserved among the Harleian MSS. 565, fol. 130.

"To Powlys then he held his way  
 With all his lordys, sooth to say;  
 The mayor was ready, and met him there  
 With the crafts of London in good array.  
 'Hail, comely king,' the mayor gan say,  
 'The grace of God now be with thee,  
 And speed thee well in thy journey,  
 And grant thee ever, more degree!'  
 'Amen!' quoth all the commonalty.  
 To Saint Powlys then he held his way,  
 And offered there full worthily;  
 From thence to the queen the self-same day,  
 And took his leave full reverently."

This farewell visit to Joanna was the last thing Henry V. did, previously to leaving his capital. Their perfect amity, at that time, may be inferred from Henry's gracious license to the royal widow, whom he styles "his dearest mother, Joanna, queen of England," to reside with her retinue in any of his royal castles of Windsor, Wallingford, Berkhamstead, and Hertford, as of old, during his absence in foreign parts. This order is dated Winchester, June 30th, 1414.<sup>1</sup>

There are also various gifts and concessions granted by Henry V. to queen Joanna, on the rolls of the 3d, 4th, and 5th years of his reign. Her eldest son, the duke of Bretagne, either from caution, or because he was unable to take a decided part in the great political contest between England and France, maintained a strict neutrality; but Arthur, her second son, boldly espousing the cause of France, was the first who attacked the outguards of Henry's camp, near Agincourt, at the head of two thousand French cavalry. This fiery assault, his first essay in arms, was made at midnight, on the eve of St. Crispin's day, in the midst of a tempest of wind and rain. Arthur was repulsed by the troops of his royal step-brother, and was desperately wounded, and made prisoner in the battle, the following day.

The chronicler, from whom White Kennet has collated the reigns of the three Lancastrian sovereigns, records the capture of Arthur, in these words:—"The son of the late duke of Bretagne, by the queen-regent of England, was taken prisoner." The same author again mentions Joanna of Navarre by this title, when he says, "king Henry despatched a messenger over to England, to the queen-regent,<sup>2</sup> with the news of his victory, which filled the nation with universal joy. *Te Deum* was sung in all the churches, and a mighty procession, consisting of the queen, prelates and nobility, with the mayor and corporation of the city of London, walked from St. Paul's to Westminster, on the following day, to return public thanks to Almighty God." The Chronicle of London<sup>3</sup> also states "that queen Johane, with her lords, attended by the mayor, aldermen, and several of the livery companies of London, walked in solemn procession from St. Paul's to Westminster Abbey, to offer thanksgivings for the victory;" and, having made a rich offering at the shrine

<sup>1</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*.

<sup>2</sup> White Kennet's *Complete History of England*, pp. 318, 319.

<sup>3</sup> Edited by sir Harris Nicolas. *Harrison's Survey of London*.

of St. Edward, they all returned in triumph to the city, amidst the acclamations of the people.

Whosoever might exult in the national triumph of Agincourt, Joanna had little cause for joy. The husband of her eldest daughter,<sup>1</sup> the gallant duke of Alençon, who clove king Henry's jewelled coronal with his battle-axe in the *mêlée*, was there slain. Her brother, Charles of Navarre, the constable of France, died of his wounds the following day; and Arthur, her young gallant son, was a captive. No trifling tax must the widowed queen have paid for greatness, when, instead of putting on her mourning weeds, and indulging in the natural grief of a fond mother's heart, for these family calamities, she was called upon to assume the glittering trappings of state, and to take the leading part in a public pageant of rejoicing. Till this latter duty was performed, as befitted the queen of England, she forbore to weep, and to make lamentation for the dead; or to bewail the captivity of him, who was led a prisoner in the train of the royal victor.

The trials of Joanna only commenced with the battle of Agincourt, for she had to endure much maternal anxiety as to the future position of her eldest son, the reigning duke of Bretagne, with whose temporising conduct Henry V. was greatly exasperated; and she had to perform the hard task of welcoming, with deceitful smiles and congratulations, the haughty victor, who had wrought her house such woe, and who was the arbiter of her son Arthur's fate. Arthur of Bretagne, as earl of Richmond, was Henry's subject, and, by bearing arms against him at Agincourt, had violated his liegeman's oath, and stood in a very different position with his royal step-brother, from the other prisoners. Well was it for him, considering the vindictive temper of Henry V., that the queen had in former times laid that prince under obligations, by assisting him, in time of need, with pecuniary aid. The first interview between Joanna and her captive son is, perhaps, one of the most touching passages in history. They had not seen each other since 1404, when Arthur, as a boy, visited the court of England, to receive the investiture of the earldom of Richmond from his royal step-father, Henry IV. twelve years before. Joanna, anxious to ascertain whether he retained any remembrance of her person (which, perhaps, she felt was faded by years of anxious tendance on a husband sick alike in body and mind), yet, fondly hoping that maternal instinct would lead him to his mother's arms, placed one of her ladies in her chair of state, and retired among her attendants, two of whom stood before her, while she watched what would follow. Arthur, as might be expected, took the queen's representative for his mother; she supported the character for some time, and desired him to pay his compliments to her ladies. When, in turn, he came to Joanna, her heart betrayed her, and she exclaimed, "Unhappy son, do you not know me?" The call of nature was felt; both mother and son burst into tears. They then embraced with great tenderness, and she gave him a thousand nobles, which the princely youth distributed among his fellow-prisoners, and his guards, together with

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<sup>1</sup> Marie of Bretagne, who was formerly betrothed to Henry V

some apparel. But, after this interview, Henry V. prevented all communication between the mother and her son.<sup>1</sup>

Arthur was doomed to waste the flower of his youth in a rigorous confinement, first in the Tower of London, and afterwards in Fotheringhay Castle, Henry V. being too much exasperated against him to listen to Joanna's intercessions, either for his release, or ransom. Henry, however, continued to treat his royal step-mother with great respect. At the feast of St. George, 1416, queen Joanna, who was a lady of the Garter, with the king's aunts, the queens of Spain and Portugal, his sisters, the queen of Denmark and duchess of Holland, received each eight ells of blue-coloured cloth, with two furs made of three hundred bellies of miniver, and one hundred and seventy garter stripes, to correspond, to make them robes, furred and embroidered with the military order of the Garter, all alike, as the gift of the king. Henry, on this occasion, presented cloth and fur to a chosen number of the great ladies of the court, as well as to the princes of the blood-royal, and to the knights of the Garter, that they might all appear in the robes of their order, to grace the high festival of that year.<sup>2</sup>

Henry was induced to conclude a truce with the duke of Bretagne, as he himself specifies, "at the prayer of Joanna,"<sup>3</sup> whom he styles "that excellent and most dear lady, the queen, our mother." This was in the year 1417.

King Henry directed his collectors of the port of London to allow three sealed cases of money, sixty pipes of wine, seven baskets of lamps, two bales of cloth of Josselin,<sup>4</sup> and one barrel of anchovies, coming to his dearest mother, Joanna, queen of England, at her need, in the ship called the St. Nicholas of Nantes, to pass, in July 1418, without collecting any impost, or due. The same day, he directs the authorities of the ports of Plymouth and Dartmouth to admit, free of all duty, Johan de Moine, from the ports of Bretagne, with eight great barrels of wine of Tyre and Malmsey, for his dearest mother, Joanna, queen of England, from her son, the duke of Bretagne.

The year following, Joanna was arrested at her dower palace of Haverling Bower, by the order of the duke of Bedford, the regent of England. These are Walsingham, a contemporary historian's words:<sup>5</sup>—"The king's step-mother, queen Johanne, being accused by certain persons of an act of witchcraft, which would have tended to the king's harm, was committed (all her attendants being removed) to the custody of sir John Pelham, who, having furnished her with nine servants, placed her in Pevensey Castle, there to be kept under his control."<sup>6</sup> Joanna's

<sup>1</sup> Histoire d'Artur, 3ème Duc de Bretagne. From sir Harris Nicolas' Agincourt, p. 158, vol. ii.      <sup>2</sup> Rymer's Fœdera.      <sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Rymer's Fœdera. This cloth was a species of linen manufacture, much of the nature of Holland; it was the finest of that linen called Rennes cloth, for which Bretagne was famous in the middle ages. Rennes sheets were often left by will, as costly luxuries; they figure in sir John Falstaff's household inventory.

<sup>5</sup> Likewise Holingshed, Speed, stow. Parliamentary history of England.

<sup>6</sup> The Chronicle of London, a contemporary, also gives this account:—"Also this same year Frere Randolf, a master of divinity, that some time was the

principal accuser was her confessor, John Randolph, a Minorite friar; though it seems Henry had had previous information that the queen-dowager, with the aid of two domestic sorcerers, Roger Colles of Salisbury, and Petronal Brocart, was dealing with the powers of darkness for his destruction.<sup>1</sup> John Randolph was arrested at the Isle of Guernsey, and sent over to the king in Normandy,<sup>2</sup> where his confessions seem to have determined Henry to proceedings of the utmost rigour, against his royal mother-in-law, who was, as we have said, forthwith arrested, with the suspected members of her household, and committed as a close prisoner, first to the castle of Leeds, one of her own palaces, and afterwards to that of Pevensey. She was, by Henry's order, deprived not only of her rich dower lands and tenements, but of all her money, furniture, and personal property, even to her wearing apparel. Her servants were dismissed, and others placed about her by the authority of her gaoler, sir John Pelham.<sup>3</sup> These circumstances are all set forth in the following extract from the Parliamentary Rolls for 7th Henry V. :—

"Be it remembered that, upon information given to the king, our sovereign lord, as well by the relation and confession of one friar John Randolph, of the order of Friars Minors, as by other credible evidences, that Johanne, queen of England, had compassed and imagined the death and destruction of our said lord the king, in the most high and horrible manner that could be devised; the which compassing, imagination, and destruction, have been openly published throughout all England. So it is by the council of the lord the king advised, assented and ordained, that, amongst other things, all the goods and chattels of the said queen, and also all the goods and chattels of Roger Colles of Salisbury and of Petronel Brocart, lately residing with the said queen, who are notoriously suspected of the said treason, in whose hands soever they may be, which the said queen had (or the said other persons before named) on the 27th day of September last past and since, and also all the issues, rents, &c. of all castles, manors, &c., which the said queen held in dower and otherwise, should be received and kept by the treasurer of England, or his deputy for the time being, who should have the custody of the said goods and chattels, &c., and that letters patent should be passed under the great seal in that behalf; and that the said treasurer or his deputy should provide for the support of the said queen, and the servants assigned to her, honestly, according to the advice of the council, openly read in this parliament. And because it was doubted whether persons bound to pay rents, &c. to the queen could be surely discharged, it is ordained in this present parliament, at the request of the Commons assembled, all such persons, upon payment to the treasurer, should be protected against the said queen in all time to come."

In the Issue Roll for the same year<sup>4</sup> is the following entry :—

"27th November. To sir John Pelham, knight, appointed by the king and council for the governance and safe custody of Joan queen of England. In me-

queen's confessor, at the exciting of the said queen, by sorcery and necromancy wrought for to *astroy* the king; but, as God wolde, his falseness was at last espied, wherefore by common parliament the queen forfeited her lands." This Chronicle makes the circumstance contemporary with the siege of Rouen. Omerbourne merely says, Joanna committed an infamous *maleficium*, and was taken from her family and given to the charge of lord John Pelham in the castle of Pevensey. He notes it in the events of 1419.

<sup>1</sup> Holingshed.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Parliamentary Records.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* Parliamentary Records.

<sup>4</sup> Henry V.

ney paid to him by the hands of Richard le Verer, her esquire, in advance, for the support and safe custody of the queen aforesaid, 1666*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* Master Peter de Ofball was appointed the said queen's physician."<sup>1</sup>

White Kennet asserts that Joanna was brought to a trial, that she was convicted, and forfeited her goods by sentence of parliament; but of this there is not the slightest proof. On the contrary, it is quite certain, that she never was allowed an opportunity of justifying herself from the dark allegations that were brought against her. She was condemned unheard, despoiled of her property, and consigned to years of solitary confinement, without the slightest regard to law, or justice. Her perfidious confessor, Randolph, while disputing with the parson of St. Peter's ad Vincula, was for ever silenced, by the combative priest strangling him, in the midst of his debate.<sup>2</sup> The fury with which the argument was pursued, and its murderous termination, would suggest the idea, that the guilt or innocence of their royal mistress must have been the subject of discussion. Be this as it may, the death of Randolph, under these circumstances, leaves undetailed the "high and horrible means" whereby the royal widow was accused of practising against the life of the king. He was the only witness against her; and, by his death, the whole affair remains among the most inscrutable of historical mysteries.

There is, however, among the unpublished papers of Rymer, a document which seems to throw some light on the affair, by evidencing the previous attempts of Henry V. to extort from Joanna the principal part of her dower in loans; for, we find some time before her arrest and disgrace, that in the beginning of the year, he enjoins "his dear chevalier William Kynwolmersh, to send all the sums of money he can possibly borrow<sup>3</sup> of the dower of Johane, the queen, late wife of our sovereign lord and sire, the late king, whom God assoil. Let these sums be sent from time to time without fail, *leaving her only money enough for her reasonable expenses*, and to pay any annuities she may have granted."

In all probability, Joanna's resistance of this oppression was answered by her arrest, on the frivolous accusation which afforded the king a pretence for replenishing his exhausted coffers, at her expense.

Joanna did not enjoy the solace of her young and gallant son Arthur's company, in her captivity. Their doleful years of durance were wasted in separate prison-houses.

The return of the royal victor of Agincourt, with his beautiful and illustrious bride, brought no amelioration to the condition of the unfortunate queen-dowager and her son. Katherine of Valois was nearly related in blood to Joanna of Navarre, being the daughter of her cousin-germain, Charles VI. Katherine was also sister to the young duchess of Bretagne, Joanna's daughter-in-law; yet she received neither sympathy nor attention from her, but had the mortification of knowing that her dower, or, at least, the larger part of it, was appropriated to maintain Katherine's state, as queen of England.

<sup>1</sup> Devon's Extracts from Pell Records, p. 362.

<sup>2</sup> Bayley's History of the Tower. Speed. Holingshed.

<sup>3</sup> *Fairie louez* is the expression used by the king. Unpublished MSS. of Rymer 4602. Plut. cxiii. v.

Henry V. likewise presented the abbess of Syon with a thousand marks, from the revenues of the imprisoned queen.<sup>1</sup>

We find, in the acts of the Privy Council, that Henry returned a favourable answer to the petition of William Pomeroy, one of Joanna's esquires, who humbly supplicates for a continuance of a pension of twenty marks a-year, which had formerly been granted by the queen Johanne, in reward of his long and faithful services to her. Henry, with his own hand, has written, "We wol that he have the twenty marcs."<sup>2</sup>

In the fourth year of her captivity, an important prisoner of state was consigned to the same fortress in which the queen-dowager was incarcerated. This was sir John Mortimer, the uncle of the earl of March.<sup>3</sup> His frequent attempts to escape from the Tower, caused him to be removed to the gloomy fortress of Pevensey. The widow of Henry IV. being confined within the same dark walls with this fettered lion of the rival house of Mortimer, is a curious and romantic circumstance. Yet, when Mortimer arrived at Pevensey, the period of Joanna's incarceration there was drawing to a close. Her royal persecutor, the puissant conqueror of France, feeling the awful moment was at hand when he must lay his sceptre in the dust, and render up an account of the manner in which he had exercised his regal power, was seized with late remorse for the wrong and robbery of which he had been guilty towards his father's widow; and, knowing that repentance without restitution is of little avail in a case of conscience, he addressed the following injunction to the bishops and lords of his council, dated July 13, 1422:

"Right worshipful fathers in God, our right trusty and well-beloved: Howbeit we have taken into our hand till a certain time, and for such causes as ye know, the dowers of our mother, queen Johanne, except a certain pension thereof yearly, which we assigned for the expense reasonable of her, and of a certain *menie*<sup>4</sup> that should be about her: we, doubting lest it should be a charge unto our conscience, for to occupy forth longer the said dower in this wise, the which charge we be advised no longer to bear on our conscience, will and charge you, as ye will appear before God for us in this case, and stand discharged in your own conscience also, that ye make deliverance unto our said mother, the queen, wholly of her said dower, and suffer her to receive it as she did heretofore; and that she make her officers whom she list (so they be our liegemen and good men), and that therefore we have given in charge and commandment, at this time, to make her full restitution of her dower above said. Furthermore, we will and charge you that her beds and all other things moveable, that we had of her, ye deliver her again. And ordain her that she have of such cloth and of such colour as she will devise herself v. or vi. gowns, such as she useth to wear. And because we suppose she will soon remove from the place where she now is, that ye ordain her horses for eleven *chares*,<sup>5</sup> and let her remove them into whatsoever place within our realm that her list and when her list, &c.

"Written the thirteenth day of July, the year of our reign tenth."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Tyler's Life of Henry V.

<sup>2</sup> Acts of Privy council. Edited by sir Harris Nicolas, vol. ii. p. 302. <sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Household servants; from which word comes the term menial.

<sup>5</sup> Cars or chariots.

<sup>6</sup> Parliamentary Rolls, 1st of Henry VI., where there is also an inventory of queen Joanna's sequestered property.



In common justice, Henry ought to have made this *amende* perfect, by adding a declaration of his royal step-mother's innocence, from the foul charge which had been the ostensible pretext for the persecution to which she had been subjected. His letter contains in effect, however, if not the words, a complete exoneration of queen Joanna; and it appears unaccountable, that any apologist should be found to justify the conqueror of Agincourt for acts which were so sore a burden to his departing spirit, and which he himself confesses, in this memorable letter "that he had been advised no longer to bear on his conscience," lest he should rue it hereafter.

The spoliation of the queen-dowager had extended, we find, even to the sequestration of her beds and rich array. She had certainly been compelled to divest herself of her queenly attire, and to assume the coarse garb of penance. Whether the peace-offering of five or six new gowns, with the royal permission for the injured lady to consult her own taste in the colour, material, and fashion of the same, was considered by Joanna as a sufficient compensation for the wrong and robbery and weary imprisonment she had undergone, is doubtful. But, be this as it might, and even if the gowns (which the warlike majesty of England so solemnly enjoins his chancellor, and the other lords spiritual and temporal of his council, to endow her with) were promptly rendered, it is certain she could not have enjoyed the satisfaction of appearing in them; courtly etiquette compelling her, within seven weeks after the date of Henry's letter of restitution, to assume the mockery of mourning weeds for his decease. This event occurred August 31, 1422. But, it appears, that some amelioration had previously taken place in regard to Joanna's captivity; for, by a contemporary document, it is evident she had been removed to Leeds Castle, the same summer, as the following entries appear in her household book,<sup>1</sup> dated July 14th, first year of Henry VI. It is to be observed, that first the duke of Gloucester, and then cardinal Beaufort, visited her, just before the formal official notice of Henry's penitence, and assuredly brought her private intelligence of the change in her favour; for, on June the 12th, is an item "that the duke dined with her at Leeds, and went away after dinner; expenses for the feast, 4*l.* 2*s.*;" and, on the 2d of the next month, "cardinal Beaufort dined with her at a cost of 4*l.* 14*s.* 2*d.*" Her oblations and alms "at the cross of the chapel within Leeds Castle came to 6*s.* 8*d.*;" but she laid in a stock of Gascon (claret), Rochelle and Rhenish wines, at the cost of 56*l.* 0*s.* 4*d.* Her alms seem influenced by her usual avarice, for if she could find money to buy so much wine, she might have commemorated her signal deliverance from captivity and obloquy by a larger outlay than a mark. All her recorded donations appear despicably mean; indeed, this precious historical document singularly confirms our estimate of her character, that grasping avarice was the chief source of

<sup>1</sup> This information is gathered from one of the valuable documents in the collection of sir Thomas Phillipps, of Middlehill, Worcestershire. This gentleman, with a liberality only equalled by his munificence in purchasing MSS. (containing the true muniments of history) has permitted us not only access to his stores, but afforded his own advice and assistance in the transcription of references.

her misfortunes. Her clerk, Thomas Lilbourne, proceeds to note the expenses of her mourning dress for the death of her persecutor, as well for her own person as the maids of her chamber. There are some odd notices of the price of making court dresses, which may be amusing to the ladies of the present day. There are charges for seven yards of black cloth for a gown for the queen at the feast of Easter, at 7*s.* 8*d.* per yard, and for making a gown for her, 1*s.* 6*d.*; for one cape of black, for black silk loops, and for 400 clasps, (possibly hooks and eyes), for 7½ yards of black cloth, at 7*s.* per yard, for the queen's person; for making a cape for the queen; and for black satin, and for grey squirrel fur, 23*s.* 4*d.*; for fur to make a collar and mantle for the queen, 20*s.*; for 1 oz. of black thread, 1*s.* 6*d.*; 3 dozen shoes, at 6*d.* per pair. Likewise to Agnes Stowe, of the family of lady Margaret Trumpyngton, for her good services to the queen, as a gift, 6*s.* 8*d.* To two sergeants-at-law, to plead for the queen's gold, 6*s.* 8*d.* To Nicholas, minstrel, a gift of the queen, 6*s.* 8*d.* None of Joanna's gifts exceed this sum, which is the amount of a mark. Some of the articles are curious,—as, one pot of green ginger, 9*s.* 6*d.*; for rose-water, 7*s.* 6*d.*; to Master Laurence, for cinnamon, 7*s.* 10*d.* The queen gives 6*d.* per pair for her maids' shoes, and 7*d.* for those of her own wearing.

Notwithstanding the earnest desire of Henry V. for the restoration of Joanna's dower, the matter was attended with great difficulty, on account of the manner in which he had disposed of this property. He had, in fact, sold, mortgaged, and granted it away to a variety of persons, besides endowing his own queen (now also a queen-dowager) with the town and appurtenances of Hertford, and many other manors which had been settled on queen Joanna by his father, king Henry IV. The smoothing of such a ravelled skein caused much delay and trouble to all parties; and we find, in the second of Henry VI., that a petition was presented from the noble lady Joanna, queen of England, requiring all the grants made by the late king Henry V. to be quashed by parliament, that she might receive her revenues.

The answer to the petition was, "that the same should be granted in all points, provided that those persons, who had laid out money upon the queen's lands, should have the option of taking the same under her, at the same term, or rent, at which they then held them from the crown."<sup>1</sup>

Joanna of Navarre survived her restoration to liberty, wealth, and royal station, many years,—“living,” says Weever, “in all princely prosperity.” Her grandson, Giles of Bretagne,<sup>2</sup> was reared and educated with the youthful king Henry VI., and was much beloved by him; a circumstance which leads to the conclusion, that queen Joanna was likewise in favour at the English court. Her favourite residence was

<sup>1</sup> Rolls. Parl. iv. p. 247.

<sup>2</sup> This young prince was allowed an annuity of 123 marks. (Issue Rolls) He received the order of the Garter. Great jealousies regarding his English connexions arose on his return to his native country, on the death of his grandmother, queen Joanna. An awful tragedy occurred in Bretagne, terminating in his death, and that of his brother, Joanna's elder grandson, duke Francis I.

the sylvan retreat of Havering Bower. She also kept her state sometimes at Langley, where her retirement was enlivened occasionally by shows, as the rude theatrical entertainments of the fifteenth century were designated. We learn, from a contemporary chronicle, that in the ninth year of Henry VI. a grievous and terrible fire took place, at the manor of the lady queen Joanna, at Langley, in which there was great destruction of the buildings, furniture, gold and silver plate, and household stuff. These disasters happened "through the want of care, and drowsiness, of a player, and the heedless keeping of a candle."<sup>1</sup>

This fire is the last event of any importance that befell the royal widow, after her restoration to her rights. Joanna was treated with all proper consideration, by the grandson of her deceased consort, the young king Henry VI. While residing at her palace of Langley, 1437, she was honoured with a new-year's gift, from this amiable prince, as a token of his respect. This was a tablet of gold, garnished with four balass rubies, eight pearls, and in the midst a great sapphire. The tablet had been formerly presented to the young king, by my lady of Gloucester; whether by Jacqueline or Eleanora Cobham, is left doubtful.<sup>2</sup>

In the July following, Joanna died at Havering Bower. This event is thus quaintly noted by the chronicle of London, a contemporary record:—

"This same year, 9th of July, died queen Jane, king Henry IV.'s wife. Also the same year died all the lions in the Tower, the which was nought seen in no man's time before out of mind."

Joanna was certainly turned of seventy at the time of her death, which occurred in the fifteenth year of Henry VI., 1437. She survived her first husband, John duke of Bretagne, nearly thirty-eight years, and her second, Henry IV. of England, twenty-four.<sup>3</sup> She had nine children by the duke of Bretagne:<sup>4</sup> Joanna, who died in infancy; John, who succeeded his father, and died in 1442; Marie, duchess of Alençon, who died in 1446; Blanche, countess of Armagnac, and Margaret, viscountess Rohan, both of whom died in the flower of youth, supposed to have been poisoned; Arthur, earl of Richmond, so long a captive in England, who afterwards became illustrious in French history, as the valiant count de Richemonte; Jules, the third son of Joanna, died in England, 1412; Richard, count d'Estampes, died the year after his mother. The queen had no children by Henry IV.

The following summonses were issued by Henry VI. to the nobles, male and female, to do honour to the funeral of this queen:—

"Trusty and well-beloved cousin, know as much as we, by name of our leal uncle of Gloucester, and other of our council, have appointed the funerals of our grandmother queen Joanna (whom God assoile) to be holden and solemnised at Canterbury, the sixth day of August next coming. Believe that we have appointed the said uncle, and other lords and ladies of our realm, and you cousin (*blank for the name*), to be ready, for the same day to the worship of God and our said grandmother; we desire, therefore, and pray you (putting off your

<sup>1</sup> Harl. MSS. 3775, art. 9.  
Stow; Weever.

<sup>2</sup> Excerpta Historica, p. 149.

<sup>3</sup> P. 123

<sup>4</sup> Bentham's Genealogical Tables.

*pleasure, and excusations* ceasing), dispose you to be, in person, at the solemnity of the said funeral, according to our singular trust in ye.

"Given under our Privy Seal, at Oxford, the 23rd day of July."

Added to this document is the following list:—

"To be at Canterbury at queen Joanna's interment: my lord of Gloucester, my lady of Gloucester, the earl of Huntingdon, of Northumberland, of Oxford, lord Poinings, the duchess of Norfolk, the younger countess of Huntingdon, of Northumberland, of Oxford. The archbishop of Canterbury, the bishop of Norwich, the bishop of Winchester, the prior of Christchurch at Canterbury, the abbot of St. Augustins there, and the abbot of Battle."<sup>1</sup>

The corpse of queen Joanna rested at Bermondsey Abbey, on its way to Canterbury Cathedral, where she was interred in the same vault which her pious care had provided as the *domus ultima* of her royal consort, Henry IV. A superb altar-tomb had been prepared under her auspices for that monarch; and there their effigies repose side by side, in solemn state, near the tomb of the Black Prince. Joanna's statue, like her portrait in the picture of her coronation, gives us the idea of a very lovely woman; her throat long and delicate; slender but rounded arms; her bust beautiful. Her features are small and regular, with an expression of *finesse*; the eyes and eyebrows very long. Her head is singularly high, and at the same time, very broad from the eyebrows upwards; the whole gives the idea of an exact portrait. The tomb is wrought in alabaster, enamelled with colours. The dress is elegant; her beautiful arms are naked, being only shaded behind by the royal mantle, fastened to the back of her cotehardi by a jewelled band, which passes round the corsage, and rich brooches clasp the mantle on the shoulders. Her bosom and shoulders are much shown; round her throat is a collar of SS, very elegant, and the oldest specimen extant of this ornament. Studs, set with jewels, are placed down the front of the cotehardi, which is a tight jacket trimmed with ermine, without sleeves; round her hips is a band of jewels, as a belt, from which her gown falls in full folds over her feet.

Joanna's device, an ermine collared and chained, is represented with her motto, "Temperance," on the cornice and canopy of her tomb.<sup>2</sup> Her arms may be seen by the curious in that valuable and beautiful publication, "Regal Heraldry," by Mr. Willement. They were formerly in the windows of Christchurch, near Newgate.<sup>3</sup>

The tomb of king Henry and queen Joanna is near the site once occupied by the shrine of Thomas à Becket; Henry having expressed a superstitious wish, that his mortal remains should repose under the especial protection of this far-famed saint.

"But yet, though all was carved so fair,  
And priests for Marmion breathed the prayer,  
The last lord Marmion rests not there,"

may those say, with regard to the sepulchre of Henry IV., who are dis-

<sup>1</sup> Cottonian MSS. In the original document the queen's name is spelt Jehane and Jehance.

<sup>2</sup> Sandford.

<sup>3</sup> Willement's Regal Heraldry, plate 7.

posed to credit the statement of a contemporary, though certainly not unprejudiced chronicler, subjoined.

*The testimony of Clement Maydestone, translated from a Latin MS. in the library of Bennet College, Cambridge, 1440:—*

"Thirty days after the death of Henry IV., September 14th, 1412,<sup>1</sup> one of his domestics came to the house of the Holy Trinity at Houndslow, and dined there. And as the bystanders were talking at dinner-time of the king's irreproachable morals, this man said to a certain esquire named Thomas Maydestone, then sitting at table, 'Whether he was a good man or not, God knows, but of this I am certain, that when his corpse was carried from Westminster towards Canterbury (by water) in a small vessel, in order to be buried there, I and two more threw his corpse into the sea between Birkingham and Gravesend. For,' he added with an oath, 'we were overtaken by such a storm of winds and waves, that many of the nobility who followed us in eight ships were dispersed, so as with much difficulty to escape being lost. But we who were with the body, despairing of our lives, with one consent threw it into the sea; and a great calm ensued. The coffin in which it lay, covered with a cloth of gold, we carried, with great solemnity, to Canterbury, and buried it; the monks of Canterbury therefore say, that the tomb, not the body of Henry IV., is with us! As Peter said of holy David.' As God Almighty is my witness and judge, I saw this man, and heard him speak to my father, T. Maydestone, that all the above was true.

"CLEMENT MAYDESTONE."

This wild and wondrous tale, emanating as it does from a source so suspicious as Henry's sworn foes, the two Maydestones,<sup>2</sup> we are disposed

<sup>1</sup> Both dates are incorrect; Henry died March 20, 1413.

<sup>2</sup> The narrative of Clement Maydestone was considered by the antiquarians of the present century sufficiently worthy of attention to cause the examination of the tomb of Henry IV. and his queen Joanna, which took place August 21, 1832, in the presence of the bishop of Oxford, lady Harriet and sir Charles Bagot, John Alfred Kemp, esq., &c. We give the following account from the testimony of an eye-witness:—

"When the rubbish was cleared away, we came to what appeared to be the lid of a wooden case of very rude form and construction; upon it, and entirely within the monument, lay a leaden coffin, without any wooden case, of a much smaller size and very singular shape." From the woodcut given, the last abode of Joanna of Navarre, queen of England, resembles what children call an apple turnover. It was her coffin which rested on that of her lord.

"Not being able to take off the lid of the large coffin, as a great portion of its length was under the tomb, they sawed an aperture in the lid. Immediately under the coffin-board was found a quantity of haybands filling the coffin, and on the surface of them lay a very rude small cross, formed by merely tying two twigs together. This fell to pieces on being moved. When the haybands, which were very sound and perfect, were removed, we found a leaden case or coffin, in some degree moulded to the shape of a human figure; it was at once evident this had never been disturbed, but lay as it was originally deposited, though it may be difficult to conjecture why it was placed in a case so rude and unsightly, and so much too large for it that the haybands had been used to keep it steady. After cutting through lead and leather wrappers, the covers were lifted up, and the face of the king appeared in perfect preservation; the nose elevated, the cartilage even remaining, though on the admission of air it rapidly sank away. The skin of the chin entire, of the consistence, thickness, and colour of the upper leather of a shoe; the beard thick and matted, of a deep russet colour; the jaws

to regard as *non vero ma ben trovato* ; but it was calculated to make a powerful impression on the minds of the ignorant and superstitious, and it is probable that it was revived to the great disadvantage of Henry's widowed queen, at the time when she was branded by her royal stepsons, Henry V., and Bedford, with the foul charge of witchcraft.

The evil practices of queen Joanna's deceased father, Charles le Mauvais, the royal sorcerer and poisoner of Navarre, doubtless operated also against her, at the period to which we allude ; and, notwithstanding the implied exculpation of her character in Henry V.'s death-bed letter of restitution, a degree of superstitious terror was long connected with her memory.<sup>1</sup>

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perfect, and all the teeth in them excepting one fore-tooth." The body of Joanna of Navarre was not examined.

Although the gentleman to whom we are indebted for these particulars appears convinced that he has seen the body of the king, there are one or two circumstances corroborative of the marvellous narrative of Clement Maydestone : such as the absence of the regal insignia in which the remains of defunct kings of England were always adorned for the grave ; the discrepancy of size between the outer case and the leaden coffin, and the rude stuffing of the intermediate space with haybands ; as if, after the attendants had consigned the royal corpse to the roaring waves, they had hastily supplied its place with another, taken from some vault or cemetery on the banks of the Thames, and filled it up with haybands. The cross of witch-elm twigs is likewise corroborative that supernatural fears had been excited regarding this interment. The perfect state of the skin, too, is inconsistent with the horrible leprosy with which Henry died.

<sup>1</sup> In an old topographical work we remember to have read that a tradition existed even in the last century that the ghost of "Jone the witch-queen haunted the site of her favourite palace, Havering atte Bower."

# KATHERINE OF VALOIS,

SURNAMED THE FAIR,

CONSORT OF HENRY V.

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## CHAPTER I.

Early calamities of Katherine—Abducted by her mother—Recaptured—Henry prince of Wales—Katherine demanded for him—His accession as Henry V.—Reiterates his demand—Refused—His invasion of France—Agincourt—Marriage-treaty renewed—Katherine's picture—Henry's exorbitant demands—Interview of Katherine and Henry V.—Her beauty—Henry in love with her—His anger—Treaty broken—Renewed after two years—Katherine writes to Henry—She is offered with the crown of France—Receives Henry at Troyes—Betrothed—Queen's knight—Marriage of Katherine and Henry—Queen's dower—French marriage-ceremonial—Letters descriptive of marriage—Musical taste of the queen—She enters Paris in state—Voyage to England—Grand coronation—Her friendship for the king of Scots—Northern progress—Katherine left in England—Disobedience—Birth of her son (Henry VI.)—Katherine's maids—Her guest—Katherine writes to the king—Prepares to join him in France.

KATHERINE OF VALOIS was a babe in the cradle when Henry V., as prince of Wales, became an unsuccessful suitor for the hand of her eldest sister Isabella, the young widow of Richard II.<sup>1</sup>

Katherine was the youngest child of Charles VI., king of France, and his queen, Isabeau of Bavaria; she was born at a period when her father's health and her mother's reputation were both in evil plight. She first saw the light, Oct. 27, 1401, at the Hôtel de St. Paul,<sup>2</sup> in Paris, a palace which was used during the reign of Charles VI. as a residence of retirement for the royal family, when health required them to lead a life of more domestic privacy, than was possible at the king's royal court of the Louvre. The young princess was reared at the Hôtel de St. Paul, and there did her unfortunate sire, Charles VI., spend the long agonising intervals of his aberrations from reason, during which the infancy of his little daughter was exposed to hardships, such as seldom fall to the lot of the poorest cottager.

Queen Isabeau joined with the king's brother, the duke of Orleans, in pilfering the revenues of the royal household; and to such a degree did

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<sup>1</sup> See the Life of Isabella, commencement of the volume.

<sup>2</sup> Moreri,—Katherine.

this wicked woman carry her rapacity, as to leave her little children without the means of supporting life. These royal infants were shut up in the Hôtel de St. Paul, wholly neglected by their vile mother; the princess Michelle being then only five years old, and the princess Katherine little more than three. The poor children, say their contemporary chroniclers, were in a piteous state, nearly starved, and loathsome with dirt, having no change of clothes, nor even of linen. The whole sustenance they had was from the charity of the inferior attendants who had not deserted the place, all the servants of the royal family being left by the profligate and reckless Isabeau without food or wages.

The state of Katherine's hapless father, who occupied a part of the palace of St. Paul, was still more deplorable;<sup>1</sup> but he was unconscious of his misery, till one day he suddenly regained his senses, and observed the disarray and neglect around him. The instant Charles VI. recovered from his attack of delirium, he appears to have resumed his royal functions, without any intermediate time of convalescence. The consequence was, that directly the news was brought to the queen that her husband spoke and looked composedly, a sense of her guilt caused her to decamp with Louis of Orleans to Milan; having ordered duke Louis of Bavaria, her brother, and the partisan of her iniquities, to follow, with the royal children.

Louis not only obeyed this order, and carried off the dauphin Louis, his two young brothers, and the princesses Michelle and Katherine, but with them the children of the duke of Burgundy. The Burgundian forces having arrived at the Hôtel de St. Paul, and missing the princely children, the duke of Burgundy sent a troop of his men-at-arms, in pursuit of them: for the heir of Burgundy, who was even then betrothed to Katherine's sister, Michelle, was abducted with his little spouse. The pursuers overtook the two princely families at Juvisy, and, after possessing themselves of the children of Burgundy, and the princess Michelle, they respectfully asked the dauphin Louis, then about ten years old, "whither he would please to go?" The royal boy replied, "I will return to my father." He was joyfully obeyed, and conducted back to Paris, with his sister Katherine, and the rest of the royal children of France.<sup>2</sup>

After the duke of Burgundy had caused the assassination of Orleans in the streets of Paris, the conduct of queen Isabeau became so infamous, that she was imprisoned at Tours; and her daughter Katherine (the only one of the princesses who was not betrothed or consecrated) was taken from her. There is reason to believe that Katherine was brought up in the convent of Poissy, where her sister Marie took the veil.

Whilst the education of Katherine the Fair is proceeding, a few pages must be devoted to the personal history of that popular hero, her future husband.

<sup>1</sup> The expression of Mezerai (quarto edition), in his abridgement from *Chronicle de St. Denis*, is—"Qu'on laissait sa personne mesme pourrir dans l'ordure, sans ir soin de le deshabiller, n'y de le changer de linge."

<sup>2</sup> bbon's History of France collated with Mezerai.



Henry V. is supposed to have been born in 1387. Monmouth Castle, the place of his birth, belonged to his mother's inheritance: it is one of the most beautiful spots in our island. As Henry was a sickly child, he was, according to tradition, taken to Courtfield to be nursed, a village about five or six miles from Monmouth. His cradle is still preserved, and is shown as a curiosity at Bristol.<sup>1</sup> The name of his nurse was Joan Waring, on whom, after he came to the throne, he settled an annuity of 20*l.* for her good services performed for him. He was given a learned education, the first foundation of which was, in all probability, laid by his mother, who was, as Froissart expressly declares, skilled in Latin, and in cloister divinity.

This princess died in the year 1394,<sup>2</sup> early in life, leaving an infant family, consisting of four sons and two daughters.<sup>3</sup> The maternal grandmother of young Henry, the countess of Hereford,<sup>4</sup> bestowed some care on his education. This is proved by the fact, that he left in his will, to the bishop of Durham, a missal and a *portophorium*, given to him by his dear grandmother.

Henry was extremely fond of music, and this taste was cultivated at a very early age; in proof whereof the household book of his grand-sire, John of Gaunt, may be cited. New strings were purchased, for the harp of the young hero, before he was ten years old. About the same time there is a charge for the scabbard of his little sword, and for an ounce of black silk to make his sword-knot; and, moreover, four shillings were expended in seven books of grammar, for his use, bound up in one volume. There is likewise an item, for payment of a courier to announce to Henry of Bolingbroke the alarming illness of the young lord Henry, his son.

Richard II., during the exile of Bolingbroke, took possession of his heir. The education of young Henry was finished in the palace of his royal kinsman, who made him his companion in his last expedition to Ireland. Here young Henry was made a knight banneret, by the sword of the king, after distinguishing himself in one of the dangerous, but desultory combats with the insurgents.

While Richard went to fulfil his ill-fortune in England, he sent young Henry to the castle of Trim, in Ireland, with his cousin-german, Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, whose father he had lately murdered. Young Henry was brought home from Ireland (after his father had revolutionised England) in a ship fitted out for that purpose by Henry Dryhurst, of West Chester. He met with his father at Chester, and in all probability accompanied him, on his triumphant march to London. Creton affirms that Henry IV. made his son prince of Wales, at his coronation. "But I think," adds Richard's sorrowing servant, "he must win it first,

<sup>1</sup> It was formerly at Troy House, a seat of the duke of Beaufort.

<sup>2</sup> Walsingham; Speed.

<sup>3</sup> Henry V.'s mother was buried within King's College, Leicester. He paid for a likeness of her to be placed over her tomb.—Pell Rolls.

<sup>4</sup> This lady was alive long after Henry had ascended the throne, and had won the victory of Agincourt.

for the whole land of Wales is in a state of revolt, on account of the wrongs of our dear lord, king Richard."

There is reason to suppose that, after his sire's coronation, prince Henry completed his education at Oxford: for there is an antique chamber of Queen's College pointed out by successive generations, as once having been inhabited by Henry. This is a room over the gateway, opposite to St. Edmund's Hall. A portrait of Henry was painted in the glass of the window,<sup>1</sup> and under it these verses in Latin:—

"To record the fact for ever,  
The Emperor of Britain,  
The triumphant Lord of France,  
The conqueror of his enemies and himself,  
HENRY V.

Of this little chamber once the great inhabitant."

Fuller, who lived more than a hundred years after Henry, points out the same college-chamber as the abiding place of the prince.

Henry was placed at Oxford, under the tutorship of his half-uncle, Henry Beaufort, a young, handsome, and turbulent ecclesiastic, whose imperious haughtiness did not arise from his ascetic rigidity of manners as a priest.<sup>2</sup> Beaufort had accompanied his charge to Ireland, and returned with him to England. The early appointment of the prince as lieutenant of Wales, March 7th, 1403, limits the probable time of his sojourn at Oxford, as a student, to the period between the commencement of the year 1400 and 1402. The prince was but sixteen when he fought courageously at that great conflict, where his father's crown was contested. At the battle of Shrewsbury, when advancing too rashly on the enemy's forces, he received a wound with an arrow in the face, the scar of which might be seen all his life. Being advised to retire, that the steel might be drawn out, "To what place?" said he; "who will remain fighting, if I, the prince, and a king's son, retire for fear, at the first taste of steel? Let my fellow-soldiers see that I bleed at the first onset; for deeds, not words, are the duties of princes, who should set the example of boldness."<sup>3</sup>

Until after 1407, the prince of Wales was actively employed in the Welsh campaigns. Although Glendower was finally beaten back to his mountain fastnesses, yet the whole of the principality was, during the reign of Henry IV., but a nominal appendage to the English monarchy. Thus deprived of the revenues annexed to his title, the gallant Henry was subjected to the most grinding and bitter poverty. His wild dissi-

<sup>1</sup> Tyler's Henry V.—The art of painting on glass had greatly fallen into decay after the accession of Henry VII., who was obliged to import the window of St. Margaret's, Westminster, from Dort. This glass portrait brings the Oxford memorial near Henry's own times.

<sup>2</sup> Beaufort's betrayal of a daughter of the illustrious house of Fitzallan is proved by his will.

<sup>3</sup> Translated from the Latin of Titus Livius of Friuli, a learned man, patronised by Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, and employed by him to write the biography of his brother; which work is (as might be expected) more replete with panegyric than incident.

pation seems to have commenced after his desultory campaigns in Wales concluded, when he returned to court with no little of the license of the partisan soldier.<sup>1</sup> His extreme poverty, which was shared by his royal sire, made him reckless and desperate, and had the natural consequence of forcing him into company below his rank.

Stow, in his *Annals*, declares "the prince used to disguise himself and lie in wait for the receivers of the rents of the crown lands, or of his father's patrimony, and in the disguise of a highwayman set upon them and rob them. In such encounters he sometimes got soundly beaten, but he always rewarded such of his father's officers who made the stoutest resistance."<sup>2</sup>

But Henry's wildest pranks were performed at a manor of his, close to Coventry, called Cheylesmore, a residence appertaining to his duchy of Cornwall. Here prince Hal and some of his friends were taken into custody by John Hornesby, the mayor of Coventry, for raising a riot.<sup>3</sup> Cheylesmore<sup>4</sup> was regarded by his careworn father with painful jealousy; "for thither," says Walsingham, "resorted all the nobility, as to a king's court, while that of Henry IV. was deserted." But Henry did not content himself with astonishing John Hornesby, the mayor of Coventry, and his sober citizens, by a mad frolic now and then; he saw the inside of a London prison as well as the gaol of Coventry. It does not appear that the prince was personally engaged in the uproars raised by his brothers, prince John and prince Thomas, at Eastcheap, which are noted in the *London Chronicle*; but in one of these frays the lord-mayor captured a favourite servant belonging to the prince of Wales, and carried him before judge Gascoigne.<sup>5</sup> Directly the prince of Wales heard of the detention of his servant, he rushed to the court of justice, where his man stood arraigned at the bar. He endeavoured with his own hands to free him from his fetters, and, on the interference of the judge, bestowed on that functionary a box on the ear; for which outrage Gascoigne dauntlessly reproofed the prince, and, at the end of a very suitable lecture, committed him to the prison of the King's Bench, to which Henry, who was struck with remorse at his own mad violation of the laws of his country, submitted with so good a grace, that Henry IV. made the well-known speech; "He was proud of having a son who

<sup>1</sup> In this assertion we follow Titus Livius. And we ask the question whether, if Henry's wildness as a youth had not been very notorious, would a contemporary (who is little more than a panegyrist), writing under the direction of the king's brother, have dared to allude to it?

<sup>2</sup> Speed is enraged at the *playermen*, who, he says, have verified the imputations of Alain Copus, a contemporary of sir John Oldcastle, accusing that noble as a seducer of the prince's youth, a wild profligate, who even robbed occasionally on the highway. Shakspeare thus had some grounds for the character of sir John Falstaff, whom, it will be remembered, he calls sir John Oldcastle in his first edition. Titus Livius describes the dismissal of sir John Oldcastle, before the crown was placed on Henry's head, in words which authorise Shakspeare's scene, excepting that the offence imputed to the knight was protestantism, rather than profligacy.

<sup>3</sup> Appendix to Fordun, quoted by Carte.

<sup>4</sup> Cheylesmore actually descended to George IV., who sold it to the marquis of Hertford.

<sup>5</sup> Harrison's Survey of London.

would thus submit himself to the laws, and that he had a judge who could so fearlessly enforce them." This exploit is supposed to have been the reason that Henry IV. removed his son from his place at the privy council.

The desperate state of the prince's finances, it is possible, might irritate him into these excesses, for all his English revenues were swallowed up in the prosecution of the war, to reconquer Wales.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, his chief income was derived from the great estates of his ward, the earl of March. This young prince, who possessed a nearer claim to the throne of England than the line of Lancaster, had been kept a prisoner in Windsor Castle, from his infancy. In 1402, Henry IV. gave the person of the minor earl, with the wardship of his revenues, to his eldest son—thus putting no small temptation in the path of an ambitious young hero. But here the very best traits of prince Henry's mixed character develop themselves: he formed the tenderest friendship for his helpless ward and rival.

From time to time Henry IV. made attempts to obtain a wife for his heir. In the preceding memoir it has been shown that he was, in childhood, contracted to the eldest daughter of Joanna, duchess of Bretagne, afterwards his step-mother. The biography of Isabella of Valois has proved how long and assiduously prince Henry wooed the young widow of the murdered Richard, until all hope ended, in her marriage with Orleans. Marie, the second daughter of France, was the next object of his choice; but she, who had been devoted to the cloister even before her birth, on being consulted whether she would prefer an earthly spouse, and accept the prince of Wales,<sup>2</sup> indignantly reprov'd her father's envoys, for imagining so profane a thought. A daughter of the duke of Burgundy was demanded for prince Henry, but the negotiation was unsuccessful. At last, both the prince and his father seemed to have determined on obtaining the hand of the fair Katherine, the youngest of the princesses of France, and a private mission was confided to Edward, duke of York, to demand her in marriage for the prince of Wales. York was absent, on this errand, at the time of the death of Henry IV.

Modern research has found reason, for the supposition, that prince Henry was intriguing to depose his father, just before his last fatal sickness. The angry assertions of Humphrey, duke of Gloucester,<sup>3</sup> accuse Henry Beaufort, bishop of Winchester, of the double treachery of instigating the prince of Wales to seize his father's crown, and at the same time of plotting to assassinate the prince. These are Gloucester's words: "My brother was, when prince of Wales, in great danger once, when he slept in the green chamber at Westminster palace. There was discovered, by the *rouse* of a little spaniel belonging to the prince, a man con-

<sup>1</sup> He was even forced, at this time, to pawn his personal ornaments, his "*petitz jounaiz*," as he calls them, to pay his garrisons in Wales, for no money could be obtained from the royal revenues. See sir Harris Nicolas' *Acts of the Privy Council*, vol. ii. p. 61.

<sup>2</sup> In the Issue Rolls are the expenses of Henry IV.'s Ambassadors for demanding in marriage, "for the prince of Wales, the second daughter of the adversary."

<sup>3</sup> *Parliamentary Rolls*; *Parliamentary History*, vol. ii. pp. 293, 294.

cealed behind the arras near the prince's bed. When he was hauled out by Henry's attendants, a dagger was found on the man's person, and he confessed he was hidden there to kill the prince in the night, instigated by Beaufort; but when the earl of Arundel heard this, he had the assassin's head tied in a sack, and flung into the Thames, to stifle his evidence."

Although no chronology is expressly marked for these events, yet internal evidence refers them to the close of Henry IV.'s existence, just before the extreme indisposition of that monarch caused the prince to seek a reconciliation with his father. This he did in a manner usually considered very extraordinary. He came to court on a New-year's day, dressed in a dark blue robe, worked with *æillets* round the collar, to each of which hung a needle and thread; and this robe,<sup>1</sup> it is asserted, was meant to indicate how much his vilifiers had slandered him to his royal sire. Why needles and threads should point out such an inference, has been an enigma; but it is explained easily enough by the memorialist of Oxford. There is a quaint old custom, founded by Robert de Eglesfield, still in use in Oxford, at Queen's College, on New-year's day, when the bursar presents to each of the members of the college a needle and thread, adding this exordium—

"Take this, and be thrifty."

What the fellows of Queen's do now with these useful implements we know not; in the time of prince Hal they certainly stuck them on their collars. The prince went to court wearing all the needles he had received from his bursar, it being the anniversary of their presentation on New-year's day;<sup>2</sup> he likewise wore the student's gown, which at the same time reminded his sire that he had not forgotten the lessons of thriftiness he had imbibed at Queen's College. Thus apparelled, he advanced into the hall of Westminster Palace,<sup>3</sup> and leaving all his company, because the weather was cold, "round about the coal fire" in the centre of the hall, he advanced singly to pay his duty to his father, who was with his attendants at the upper end. After due salutation, he implored a private audience of his sire. Henry IV. made a sign to his attendants to carry him in his chair, for he could not walk, into his private chamber, when the prince of Wales, falling on his knees, presented his dagger to his father, and requested him to pierce him to the

<sup>1</sup> Many writers have copied this curious passage, and most have quoted the biography of Titus Livius as an authority. It is, however, certain no such incident is contained in its pages. Guthrie throws light on this circumstance in his folio history of England, vol. ii. reign Henry IV. He gives the passage at length, quoting it from some *tracts* of Titus Livius; noting, moreover, that this historian received the particulars from the lips of the earl of Ormond, an eye-witness of the scene.

<sup>2</sup> Messrs. Braley and Britton coincide with our views of this event, but they have not noted the confirming circumstance of the anniversary.

<sup>3</sup> Not Westminster Hall, but the room called the white-hall (lately the House of Lords), which was the state reception room of Westminster Palace. The bed-chamber of the king, and the bed-chamber of the queen, opened into it; and, on occasions of grand festivals, the whole suite were thrown open.

heart, if he deemed that it contained any feeling but duty and loyalty towards him. Henry IV. melted into tears, and a thorough explanation and reconciliation took place between the father and the son.

The last sad scene between Henry IV. and his heir, so beautifully dramatised by Shakspeare, is, as shown in the preceding memoir, a very faithful detail of incidents recorded by ancient chroniclers.

After the death of his royal sire, Henry V. did not establish himself in the sovereignty without a short but fierce civil war, which partly assumed a religious character, and partly was founded on the report that king Richard II. was alive, and ready to claim his own. These reports were assuredly the secret motive of the exhumation of Richard's body, outwardly attributed by Henry V. to his respect for the memory of his kinsman, but in reality a deep-laid measure of state policy. This tragic scene was one of the peculiar features of that era; and the manner in which it was conducted finds no parallel, excepting in the appalling exhumation of Agnes de Castro. Richard's mouldering corpse was raised from its obscure resting-place at Langley, and seated in a rich chair of state,<sup>1</sup> adorned with regal ornaments. Henry V. walked next to his dead kinsman, and all his court followed; and, thus royally escorted, the corpse of the hapless Richard was conveyed to Westminster Abbey, and laid, with solemn pomp, in the tomb he had prepared for himself by the side of his beloved Anne of Bohemia. "The very next day," says the London Chronicle, "there was a grand cursing of sir John Oldcastle at St. Paul's Cross," who had been accused of raising the reports that Richard was in existence.

When these agitations had subsided, Henry V. renewed his application for the hand of the princess Katherine. At the same time he demanded with her an enormous dowry. If the king of France had been disposed to give him his daughter, it was scarcely possible he could bestow with her two millions of crowns, the bridal portion demanded by Henry, together with the restoration of Normandy, and all the southern provinces, once the inheritance of Eleanor of Aquitaine.<sup>2</sup>

There was a secret misgiving on the part of the French, lest the ambitious heir of Lancaster should make use of an alliance with one of their princesses, to strengthen the claim of the Plantagenets to the throne of France; yet Charles VI. would have given Katherine to Henry with a dowry of 450,000 crowns. This the English hero refused with disdain. Henry desired no better than a feasible excuse to invade France; he, therefore, resolved to win Katherine the Fair at the point of the sword, together with all the gold and provinces he demanded with her hand.

Henry's first care was to sell or pawn all the valuables he possessed, in order to raise funds for the French expedition: on which he had set his ambitious mind. Extended empire, rich plunder, and the hand of the beautiful young Katherine of Valois, were the attainments on which all the energies of his ardent character were centred. The annals of the ancient nobility or gentry of England can bear witness to the extraordi

<sup>1</sup> Weever's Funeral Monuments.

<sup>2</sup> See the Life of Eleanor, vol. i.

nary methods the Plantagenet kings took, to induce their feudal muster to tarry, beyond the forty days they were bound to appear in arms, by their tenures. Among other possessions of the royal family, the magnificent crown belonging to Henry IV., called the Great Harry, was pawned, while cupboards and beaufets at royal palaces, were ransacked of their rich goblets and flagons, and distributed to the knights and leaders of that expedition, as pledges and pawns, that their pay should be forthcoming, when coin was more plentiful.

Even that stout northern squire, to whose keeping was confided the banner of St. George,<sup>1</sup> by his warlike sovereign, did not undertake his chivalric commission without a pawn of broken silver flagons. It was necessary for Henry to make these personal sacrifices, in order to pay his army, as the unsettled temper of the times forced him to be exceedingly moderate in his pecuniary applications to his parliament. France, he meant, should pay for all.

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Strickland, the banner-bearer of St. George at Agincourt, afterwards sir Thomas Strickland, knight of the shire for Westmoreland. His petition in Norman-French is a curious illustration of the state of the times, and proves how extremely scarce specie was in England; for notwithstanding the extreme pathos with which he petitions, as a poor squire, not to be held accountable for the king's broken silver flagons, and for the restoration of his fourteen pounds four shillings and tenpence, not forgetting an odd farthing; "he was heir to extensive domains, being the eldest son of sir Walter Strickland of Helsington, knight of the shire of Westmoreland, and grandson of lord Daere of Gilsland."—See Burn's Westmoreland.

His supplication to the council of the infant Henry VI. is thus worded:—  
 "Very humbly supplicates a poor squire, Thomas de Strickland, lately the bearer of the banner of St. George for the very noble king Henry V., whom God assoil! May it please your good grace to consider the long service that the said suppliant did for the late king in parts beyond sea, at his arrival at Harfleur, and the battle of Agincourt, and since that time, when the city of Rouen was won. And your said suppliant has had no compensation for his labour at the said day of Agincourt, nor any pay at all saving only for one half-year. Not only that; but your said suppliant is brought in arrear with the exchequer for the sum of 14*l.* 10*s.* 4*d.* for certain broken silver pots which were pawned to him by the said king Henry V. The which vessels your suppliant was forced to sell, and the money obtained for them was all expended in the service of his late king. And that it may please your wise discretions, out of reverence to God and respect to the soul of the late king, to grant to your suppliant the said 14*l.* 10*s.* 4*d.*, in regard for his services, and as part payment of the debt owed him by the late king; and that this grant may be sufficient warrant for the discharge of the said suppliant from the 14*l.* 10*s.* 4*d.* aforesaid, and this for the love of God and a work of charity."

Feb. 14, 1424. There is an order from the council to exonerate *Strickland*, as they call him, from the 14*l.* 10*s.* 4*d.* See *Fœdera*, vol. x. pp. 318, 319.

They could not afford to remunerate the banner-bearer of St. George for what he calls "his labour" at the day of Agincourt, to say nothing of the still fiercer service of leading the storming of Harfleur and Rouen; but they gave his son, sir Walter Strickland, by way of payment, the office of hereditary master of the royal harriers, an office which his direct descendant and representative, Charles Strickland Standish, esq. M. P. certainly does not possess at present.

These curious particulars are referred to by sir Harris Nicolas, in his *History of Agincourt*, a work written with spirit and fire worthy of its subject. To its rich pages we have been frequently indebted.

From Southampton, Henry V. sent Antelope, his *poursuivant-of-arms*, with a letter to Katherine's father, dated from that port, to show the reality of his intentions of invasion. He demanded the English provinces and the hand of Katherine, otherwise he would take them by force. The king of France replied, "If that was his mind, he would do his best to receive him; but, as to the marriage, he thought it would be a strange way of wooing Katherine, covered with the blood of her countrymen."<sup>1</sup>

But the brother of the princess, the wild young dauphin, Louis, was imprudent enough to exasperate his dangerous adversary, by sending him a cask of Paris tennis-balls, telling him "that they were fitter playthings for him, according to his former course of life, than the provinces he demanded." The English and their sovereign were deeply exasperated at this witicism. "These balls," replied Henry, perpetrating an angry pun, "shall be struck back with such a racket as shall force open Paris gates."<sup>2</sup>

But on the very eve of Henry's embarkation—

"To cross the sea, with pride and pomp of chivalry"—

a plot for his destruction was discovered, founded on the claims of his friend the earl of March to the crown of England.

This plot was concocted by the earl of Cambridge, the king's near relative, who had married Anne Mortimer, the sister of March.<sup>3</sup> This lady had died, leaving one son, afterwards the famous Richard duke of York, who, as his uncle March was childless, was the representative of his claims. The rights of this boy were the secret motives of the Southampton conspiracy. The grand difficulty was to induce March to assert his hereditary title against his friend Henry V.

The earl of Cambridge intended, after the assassination of Henry, through the agency of the king's trusted chamberlain, to fly with March to the borders of Wales, where the earl was to declare his claims, and be crowned with the "royal crown of Spain,"<sup>4</sup> which was to pass with the common people for the crown of England, and to be carried in the van of the army on a cushion. This plot was spoiled by the romantic

<sup>1</sup> White Kennet's History, vol. i.

<sup>2</sup> No part of history is better authenticated than this incident; there is scarcely a contemporary chronicler who does not mention it. Old Caxton relates the pun of the racket.

<sup>3</sup> The young earl, with all his feudal muster, was in attendance on Henry, prepared to share the expedition, in which he won great fame. He is often confounded with his uncle, Edmund Mortimer, the son-in-law of Glendower, who was at that time supposed to be a prisoner in Trim Castle, Ireland. Hall and Shakspeare confound the two Edmund Mortimers. The early death of the mother of Richard duke of York, sister and heiress of the earl of March, is proved by the fact that her husband, the earl of Cambridge, had a second countess at the time of his death.

<sup>4</sup> This belonged to Pedro the Cruel; it was brought to England by the heiresses of that king, one of whom married John of Gaunt, the other the father of Cambridge. It appears Cambridge had it at this time in his possession. See his confession, State Trials, Fœdera, and Hearne's Syllogia.



refusal of the earl to assert his rights, or dispossess his friend and guardian. After Cambridge had opened his plan to the earl of March, that prince, avowedly by the advice of his man Lacy, refused to swear to keep the secret, but requested an hour's space to consider of the proposition; which time he used in seeking the king, and informing him of his danger, first requesting a pardon of Henry for listening sufficiently "to his rebels and traitors to understand their schemes." Henry summoned a sort of court-martial, of which his brother Clarence was president, and made quick work in the execution of Cambridge, Scrope, and sir Thomas Grey.

They were led out at the north gate, and had their heads stricken off, just as Henry's fleet hoisted sail, and steered, with a favourable wind, out of the port of Southampton, August 7th, 1415.<sup>1</sup>

Henry landed at the mouth of the Seine, three miles from Harfleur, and, after tremendous slaughter on both sides, took that strong fort of the Seine by storm, in the beginning of October. Notwithstanding this success, disease and early winter brought Henry into a dangerous predicament, till the English Lion turned at bay at Agincourt, and finished the brief and late campaign with one of those victories which shed an everlasting glory on the annals of England—

"So glared he when, at Agincourt, in wrath he turned at bay,  
And crush'd and torn beneath his paws the princely hunters lay."

*Macaulay.*

The dreadful panic into which this victory threw France, and the numbers of her nobles and princes slain and taken prisoners, were the chief advantages Henry gained by it. He returned to England, Nov. 27th, 1415, and deviating from his favourite motto, *Une sans plus*,<sup>2</sup> for a time, he gave up all thoughts of obtaining Katherine as a bride, and despatched his favourite valet, Robert Waterton,<sup>3</sup> to open a private negotiation for the hand of the princess of Arragon, if the beauty of the lady was considered by that confidential servant as likely to suit his taste.

Meantime Katherine and her family were thrown into the utmost consternation by the victories of this lion-like wooer. The death of the eldest brother of Katherine, the dauphin Louis, was said to have been accelerated by grief, for the day of Agincourt, and his demise was followed with such celerity by the decease of her next brother, the dauphin John, that all France took alarm. The loss of the princes was attributed to their unnatural mother, Isabeau of Bavaria, to whom the crime was imputed of poisoning them both. The unfortunate father of

<sup>1</sup> The pardon requested by the earl of March is, in the *Fœdera*, dated the same day. It is a pardon, not only for listening to treasonable communications, but for such a list of transgressions, that if March (who was really a highly moral young prince) had spent the whole of his short life, in sinning, he could scarcely have found time to commit them all. The unfortunate orphan of the earl of Cambridge, Richard of York, was left in the custody of Waterton, the brother of Henry V.'th's favourite valet.—*Fœdera*, vol. viii.

<sup>2</sup> Guthrie, vol. ii., reign of Henry V.

Katherine was in a state of delirium; the duke of Burgundy and the count of Armagnac were fiercely contesting for the government of France; while Paris was convulsed with the three-fold plague of anarchy, pestilence and famine. Queen Isabeau, taking advantage of all this confusion, escaped from her palace-restraint at Tours; and, joining with the duke of Burgundy, not only gained great power, as regent for her distracted consort, but obtained the control of her beautiful daughter.<sup>1</sup>

However the queen might have neglected Katherine when an infant, she was no sooner restored to her as a lovely young woman, than she obtained prodigious influence over her. The maternal feelings of Isabeau seemed centred on Katherine alone, to the unjust exclusion of her other children. Katherine had very early set her mind on being queen of England, and it will soon be shown how completely Isabeau entered into all her daughter's wishes.

In order to fulfil this object, when it was found that Rouen could no longer sustain its long dolorous siege, Isabeau sent ambassadors with Katherine's picture, to ask Henry "whether so beautiful a princess required such a great dowry as he demanded with her?" The ambassadors declared they found Henry at Rouen, "proud as a lion;" that he gazed long and earnestly on the portrait of Katherine, acknowledged that it was surpassingly fair, but refused to abate a particle of his exorbitant demands.<sup>2</sup>

The close of the year 1418 saw the fall of the wretched city of Rouen, and increased the despair of Katherine's country and family. Queen Isabeau resolved that, as the picture of the princess had not succeeded in mollifying the proud heart of the conqueror, she would try what the personal charms of her Katherine could effect. A truce was obtained with Henry V., who had now pushed his conquests as far as Melun. The poor distracted king of France, with the queen Isabeau and her beautiful daughter Katherine, in a richly ornamented barge, came to Pontoise, in hopes of effecting an amicable arrangement with the conqueror. At Pontoise a large enclosure was made with planks, within which the conferences were to be carried on; it was also surrounded by a deep ditch, having on one side the bank of the Seine. There were several entrances well secured by three barriers, and tents and pavilions, made of blue and green velvet, worked with gold, were pitched for repose and refreshment.

Notwithstanding the king of France was very much indisposed, he and queen Isabeau, the princess, the duke of Burgundy, and his council, escorted by a thousand combatants, went to the place of conference near Melun, and entered the tents without the enclosure.

Then the king of England arrived, attended by his brothers, the dukes of Clarence and Gloucester, and a thousand men-at-arms. He entered the tent pitched for him, and when they were about to commence the conference, the queen on the right hand, followed by the lady Katherine, entered the enclosure. At the same time the king of England, with

<sup>1</sup> Mezerai, vol. ii., reign of Charles VI. Folio edition.

<sup>2</sup> Monstrelet.

his brothers and council, arrived on this neutral ground by another barrier, and with a most respectful obeisance met and saluted queen Isabeau; and then king Henry not only kissed her, but the lady Katherine.

They entered the tent pitched for the conference, king Henry leading queen Isabeau. Henry seated himself opposite to Katherine, and gazed at her most intently, while the earl of Warwick was making a long harangue in French, which he spoke very well. After they had remained some long time in conference, they separated, taking the most respectful leave of each other.

This barrier scene is evidently meant to be depicted by the celebrated ancient painting once in the possession of Horace Walpole.<sup>1</sup> Henry VII. had this picture painted for his chapel at Shene, and, as the well-known likeness of Henry V. is striking, there is reason to believe the same care was taken in portraying the features of Katherine of Valois. The oval shape of her face, her clear ivory complexion, and large dark eyes, coincide with the descriptions of the old French chroniclers.<sup>2</sup> Katherine's chin is too short, or the face would be perfect; the expression is inane and passionless. She wears an arched crown, and a species of veil, trimmed at each side with ermine, and reaching to the shoulders. Her mantle, of the regal form, is worn over a close gown, tight to the throat; a strap of ermine passes down the front, and is studded with jewels.

Three weeks afterwards, all the royal personages, with the exception of the lady Katherine, met for another conference, at the barrier-ground of Pontoise. As the view of Katherine's beauty had not induced Henry to lower his demands, queen Isabeau resolved that the English conqueror should see her no more. Henry was exceedingly discontented at this arrangement. "For," says Monstrelet, "the princess was very handsome, and had most engaging manners, and it was plainly to be seen that king Henry was desperately in love with her." Yet the second conference ended, without the least abatement in his exorbitant requisitions.

After the English hero had waited unavailingly a few days, in hopes of being courted by the family of his beloved, he impatiently demanded a third interview, meaning to modify his demands;—when lo! to his infinite displeasure, when he arrived at Pontoise, he found the tents struck, the barriers pulled down, and the pales that marked out the neutral ground taken away—every thing showing that the marriage-treaty was supposed to be ended. Henry V. was infuriated at the sight, and in his transports betrayed how much he had become enamoured of Katherine.<sup>3</sup> He turned angrily to the duke of Burgundy, who was the only person belonging to the royal family of France attending the conference, and said abruptly—

"Fair cousin, we wish you to know that we *will* have the daughter of your king, or we will drive him and you out of his kingdom." The duke replied, 'Sire, you are pleased to say so; but, before you have

<sup>1</sup> This picture was sold at the late sale at Strawberry Hill, where it was, in 1842, submitted to public inspection. It is painted on board.

<sup>2</sup> See Guillaume de Gruel.

<sup>3</sup> Monstrelet.

succeeded in driving my lord and me out of this kingdom. I make no doubt that you will be heartily tired.' Many high words passed, too tedious to report, and, taking leave of each other, they separated, and each went his way."<sup>1</sup>

Before two years had elapsed, the family of Katherine were forced by dire distress to sue for the renewal of the marriage-treaty. Henry's career of conquest proceeded with terrific rapidity; he made himself master of most of the towns between Normandy and the French capital, while his brother, the duke of Clarence, and his friend, the earl of March, had already thundered at the gates of Paris. Henry was requested to name his own terms of pacification. He haughtily replied, "that he had been deceived and baffled so many times, that he would treat with no one but the princess Katherine herself, whose innocence, he was sure, would not try to deceive him."<sup>2</sup>

Notice of this speech being immediately conveyed to queen Isabeau, she made the bishop of Arras return instantly, to tell king Henry "that if he would come to Troyes, Katherine should espouse him there; and that as her inheritance he should have the crown of France after the death of king Charles;" and to gain the more credit, the bishop of Arras secretly delivered to the king a love-letter, written by the fair hand of Katherine herself, so full of sweetness, that Henry V. considered his happiness as certain.<sup>3</sup>

The English monarch was now to receive, with the hand of Katherine, not only the provinces he demanded, but the reversion of the whole sovereignty of France, with immediate possession, under the name of regent. By this treaty the elder sisters and the only brother of Katherine were to be disinherited. As soon as these terms were agreed upon, Henry, accompanied by his brothers, Clarence and Gloucester, with sixteen hundred combatants, mostly archers, advanced to Troyes, where he arrived on the 20th of May, 1420. The new duke of Burgundy, clothed in the deepest mourning for his murdered sire, met Henry at a little distance from Troyes, and conducted him in great pomp to the Hôtel de Ville, where lodgings were prepared for him. When Henry was presented the next day to Katherine, who was with her mother, enthroned in the church of Notre Dame,<sup>4</sup> he was attired in a magnificent suit of burnished armour; but, instead of a plume, he wore in his helmet a fox's tail, ornamented with precious stones.<sup>5</sup> It must be owned that the warrior king of England, now and then, indulged in a few whims regarding dress. Henry conducted the princess and her mother up to the high altar, and there the articles of peace were read. Queen Isabeau and Katherine apologised for the non-attendance of king Charles VI. on

<sup>1</sup> Monstrelet. The duke of Burgundy went to his death on the bridge of Montereau sur Yonne, where the partisans of young Charles the dauphin revenged on that prince his treacherous assassination of the duke of Orleans.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Winston Churchill's *Dives Britannica*.

<sup>3</sup> See sir Winston Churchill's *Dives Britannica*, corroborated by the *French Chronicles*.

<sup>4</sup> Monstrelet. Notes of London Chronicle, edited by sir Harris Nicolas, p 161, says it was St. Peter's church.

<sup>5</sup> Godwin's *Life of Henry*.

account of his infirm health, saying, "that the king was ill disposed." The unfortunate father of Katherine could not go through the scene, which apparently annihilated the hopes of his young heir; but the duke of Burgundy officiated as the deputy of his royal kinsman, and the important treaty was signed.<sup>1</sup>

The betrothment of Henry and Katherine instantly followed; and, when the English monarch received Katherine's promise, he placed on her finger a ring of inestimable value, supposed to be the same worn by our English queen-consorts at their coronation.<sup>2</sup> After the conclusion of the ceremony, Henry presented to his betrothed bride his favourite knight, sir Louis de Robsart,<sup>3</sup> to whom he committed the defence of her person, and the office of guarding her while in France. The real meaning of which ceremony was, that Henry V. took the princess into his own custody after betrothment, and would have retained her by force, if her family had changed their minds regarding his marriage. Katherine was now *his* property; and it was the duty of sir Louis de Robsart to guard the safe keeping of that property.

Henry himself announced the peace and betrothment, in a letter<sup>4</sup> addressed to his council of regency, the duke of Gloucester being just appointed regent of England:—

"Right trusty, and well-beloved brother. Right worshipful fathers in God, and trusty and well-beloved. Forasmuch, that we wot well that your desires were to hear joyful tidings of our good speed:—We signify to you, (worshipped be our Lord, that of our labour hath sent us good conclusion.)

"Upon Monday, the 20th day of this May, we arrived at this town of Troyes; and on the morrow *hadden* a convention betwix our moder the queen of France, and ~~our~~ brother the duc of Burgoigne (as commissaires of the king of France, our fader, for his *partie*), and us in our own person for our *partie* (side). And the accord of peace perpetual was there sworn, by both the said commissioners in the name of our aforesaid fader, and semblably by us in our own name. And the letters thereupon forthwith ensealed, under the great seal of our said fader to *us-ward*, and under ours to *him-ward*, the copy of which letter we send you enclosed in this. Also, at the said convention was marriage betrothed betwixt us and our *wyf*, daughter of our aforesaid fader, the king of France."

The treaty of peace, which the king declares is enclosed in his letter, is addressed to his viscounts<sup>5</sup> of London.

Some extracts are of a curious nature:—

"It is," says Henry, "accorded between our fader of France and us, that forasmuch as by the bond of matrimony made for the good of peace between us and our dear and most beloved Katherine, the daughter of our said fader and

<sup>1</sup> Monstrelet; and Notes of London Chronicle, by sir Harris Nicolas, p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> Speed's Chronicles.

<sup>3</sup> Monstrelet.

<sup>4</sup> The English of Henry V.'s letters, both in phraseology and orthography, is better than that of Henry VIII. Sir John Fen, in his Paston Papers, observes that the very highly educated persons of this era write letters as well spelled as in the era of Charles I., and adduces the autograph letters of Edmund Clerc. Henry V. spells all his small words of the preposition and conjunctive kind perfectly. For the sake of perspicuity, we give his writing in the orthography of the present day, unless characteristic or curious words present themselves.

<sup>5</sup> Lord-mayor and aldermen.

of our most dear moder Isabel, his wife, the said Charles and Isabel be made our fader and moder, therefore them, as our fader and moder, we shall have and worship, as it fitteth such and so worthy a prince and princess to be worshipped, before all other temporal persons of this world. Also, that the said Katherine shall take and have dower in our realm of England, as queens of England, hitherward, were wont to take and have.<sup>1</sup> That is to say, to the sum of forty thousand *scutes* (crowns) by the year, of the which twain *algates* (always) shall be worth a noble, English money. Also, if it happen that the said Katherine shall overlive us, she shall take in the realm of France, immediately from our death, twenty thousand francs yearly. Also, that after the death of our said fader, and from thenceforward, the crown and realin of France, with all their rights and appurtenances, shall remain, and abide, and be of us and of our heirs, for evermore."

"On Trinity Sunday, June 3," says Monstrelet, "the king of England wedded the lady Katherine, at Troyes, in the parish church near which he lodged. Great pomp and magnificence were displayed by him and his princes, as if he had been king of the whole world."

The archbishop of Sens went in state to bless the bed of the queen, and during the night a grand procession came to the bedside of the royal pair, bringing them wine and soup, because Henry chose in all things to comply with the ancient customs of France; and it appears this strange ceremonial was one of the usages of the royal family. The next day, after a splendid feast, where the knights of the English court proposed a succession of tournaments, he let them know "that playing at fighting was not to be the amusement of his wedding, but the actual siege of Sens, where they might tilt and tourney as much as they chose."<sup>2</sup>

The letters written on occasion of these nuptials by Henry and his courtiers, are the earliest specimens extant of English prose. The following epistle by John Ufford affords to the reader as brief and comprehensive a view of affairs, at that period, as can possibly be presented:—<sup>3</sup>

"WORSHIPFUL MAISTER,

"I recommend me to you. And as touching tidings, the king our sovereign lord was wedded with great solemnity, in the cathedral church of Troy, about mid-day on Trinity Sunday. And on the Tuesday *suving* (following), he removed towards the town of Sens, sixteen leagues thence, leading with him thither our queen and the French estate. And on Wednesday next ensuing was siege laid to that town—a great town, and a notable; it lieth toward Bourgoigne ward, and is holden strong with great number of Armagnacs.<sup>4</sup> The which town is worthily besieged. For there lie at that siege two kings, two queens (Isabeau, queen of France, and the newly married queen of England), four *ducks*,<sup>5</sup> with my lord of Bedford, when he cometh hither. The which (the duke of Bedford) on the 12th day of June shall lodge beside Paris, hitherward coming.

<sup>1</sup> There would have been no English dower for Katherine the Fair, if the unfortunate widow of Henry IV. had not been robbed of hers under the frivolous pretence of sorcery. See preceding memoir.

<sup>2</sup> Pictorial History of England; and Monstrelet. <sup>3</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. ix.

<sup>4</sup> The party of the dauphin, the disinherited brother of Katherine, were called Armagnacs, from the count of Armagnac, kinsman and prime minister to Charles VI., the upholder of the rights of his son.

<sup>5</sup> Dukes, but the word is thus spelled.

"And at this siege also are lien many worthy ladies and *jantilewomen*, both French and English, of the which many of them began feats of arms long time ago, but of lying at sieges now they begin first.

"I pray that ye will recommend me to my worshipful lord the chancellor, and to my lord the treasurer. And, furthermore, will ye *wit* (know) that Paris, with other, is sworn to obey the king our sovereign lord, as heriter and governor of France—and so they do.

"And on *Witsund* Monday final peace was proclaimed in Paris, and on Tuesday was a solemn mass of Our Lady, and a solemn procession of all the great and worthy men of Paris, thanking God for this accord.

"And now Englishmen go into Paris oft as they will, without any safe conduct or any letting (giving leave). And Paris and all other towns, turned from the Armagnac party, make great joy and mirth every holiday, in dancing and carolling. I pray God send grace to both realms, of much mirth and gladness, and give you in health much joy and prosperity long to endure.

"I pray that ye will vouchsafe to let this letter commend me to Abel Howit and Bayley, and to sir John Brockholes, and to greet well Richard Prior (whom the fair town of Vernon on Seine greeteth well also), and Will Albrow and Lark and all the *meinie*, and king Barbour and his wife. Written at the siege of Sens, the 6th day of June, in haste. Sens is further than Paris thirty-four leagues, and Troyes is further than Paris thirty-six leagues.

"Will ye say to my brother, Maister Piers, that I send him a letter by the bringer hereof?

"Your own Servant,

"JOHAN OFORT."

Thus was the honeymoon of Katherine the Fair passed at sieges and leaguers; her bridal music was the groans of France. Horror, unutterable horror, was the attendant on these nuptials; for the cruel massacre of Montereau<sup>1</sup> took place within a fortnight of the queen's espousals. Yet Katherine was no unwilling bride; for, as her brother-in-law, Philip the Good of Burgundy, expressly declared, "she had passionately longed to be espoused to king Henry; and, from the moment she saw him, had constantly solicited her mother, with whom she could do any thing, till her marriage took place."<sup>2</sup> But not a word, not a sign of objection to the cruelties and slaughter that followed her marriage, is recorded; nor did the royal beauty ever intercede for her wretched country with her newly-wedded lord.

Sens received Henry and Katherine within its walls, soon after the siege had commenced in form. The king and queen of England entered in great state, accompanied by the archbishop of Sens, who had a few days before joined their hands at Troyes. This prelate had been expelled from his diocese by the party of the Armagnacs, but he was reinstated by Henry V., who, turning to him with a smile as they entered the cathedral, said, "Now, Monseigneur Archevesque, we are quits; for you gave me my wife the other day, and I restore yours to you this day."<sup>3</sup>

While the desperate siege of Montereau proceeded, the queen of England, and her father and mother, with their courts and households,

<sup>1</sup> This sad page of history is detailed by Monstrelet. Henry V., exasperated by the desperate defence of this town for its native sovereign, butchered the garrison, under pretence of revenging the death of John duke of Burgundy, with whose death the garrison had not the slightest concern, nor was Henry in the least called upon to avenge it.

<sup>2</sup> Martin's Chronicle.

<sup>3</sup> Monstrelet.

resided at Bray sur Seine. Here Henry paid frequent visits to his bride. After the tragedy of Montercau, the united courts removed to Corbeil, where queen Katherine was joined by her sister-in-law, Margaret duchess of Clarence, and by many noble ladies, who had come from England to pay their duty to the bride of king Henry. She was with her mother and king Charles at the camp before Melun. "But, indeed," says Monstrelet, "it was a sorry sight to see the king of France bereft of all his usual state and pomp. They resided, with many ladies and damsels, about a month, in a house king Henry had built for them near his tents, and at a distance from the town, that the roar of the cannon might not startle king Charles. Every day at sunrise," continues the Burgundian, "and at nightfall, ten clarions, and divers other instruments, were ordered by king Henry to play for an hour, most melodiously, before the door of the king of France." The malady of the unhappy father of Katherine was soothed by music.

This was evidently the military band of Henry V., the first which is distinctly mentioned in chronicles. Henry was himself a performer on the harp from an early age. He likewise was a composer, delighting in church harmony, which he used to practise on the organ.<sup>1</sup> That he found similar tastes in his royal bride, is evident from an item in the Issue Rolls,<sup>2</sup> whereby it appears he sent to England to obtain new harps for Katherine and himself, in the October succeeding his wedlock: "By the hands of William Menston was paid 8*l.* 13*s* 4*d.*, for two new harps, purchased for king Henry and queen Katherine." If the reader is anxious to know who was the best harp-maker in London at this period, complete satisfaction can be given; for a previous document mentions another harp sent to Henry, when in France, "purchased of John Bore, harp-maker, London; together with several dozen harp-chords and a harp-case."

At the surrender of Melun, the vile mother of queen Katherine was proclaimed regent of France, through the influence of her son-in-law, who considered queen Isabeau entirely devoted to her daughter's interest. This was a preparatory step to a visit which Henry intended to make to his own country, for the purpose of showing the English his beautiful bride, and performing the ceremonial of her coronation. The royal personages of France and England now approached Paris, in order that the king and queen of England might make their triumphal entry into that city; but Henry, not knowing how the Parisians might receive them, chose to precede his wife, and take possession of the city, before he ventured to trust her within its walls.

"Queen Katherine and her mother made their grand entry into Paris next day. Great magnificence was displayed at the arrival of the queen of England, but it would take up too much time to relate all the rich presents that were offered to her by the citizens of Paris. The streets and houses were hung with tapestry the whole of that day, and wine was

<sup>1</sup> Elmham's Chronicle, p. 12. Likewise a French chronicler, quoted by Col. Jones in his notes to Monstrelet; and Dr. Henry, vol. x. p. 227.

<sup>2</sup> Pages 363, 367.



constantly running from brass cocks and in conduits through the squares, so that all persons might have it in abundance; and more rejoicings than tongue can tell were made in Paris, for the peace, and for the marriage of Katherine the Fair."<sup>1</sup>

The miserably exhausted state of France prevented Katherine from receiving any solid sum as her fortune; but she had an income of forty thousand francs, the usual revenue of the queens of France, settled on her at her marriage by her father; a few scanty instalments of which proved, in reality, the only property she ever derived from her own country. This circumstance gives an exemplification, by no means uncommon in life, of the manner in which exorbitancy in pecuniary demands often defeats its own ends. Had Henry V. required a more reasonable dowry with his bride, Katherine might have been reckoned among the richest of our queens, instead of being, with all her high-sounding expectations, in reality, the poorest among them all.

The royal pair spent their Christmas at Paris; but, at the end of the festival, Henry thought it best to pay some attention to the prayer of his faithful commons, who had lately begged that he, with his gracious queen, would please to return to England, to comfort, support, and refresh them by their presence.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, Henry set out with his queen on a winter journey through France, escorted by the duke of Bedford, at the head of six thousand men. Queen Katherine arrived at Amiens on St. Vincent's day, and was lodged in the hotel of maitre Robert le Jeune, bailiff of Amiens, and many costly presents were made to her by that magistrate.<sup>3</sup>

The royal pair embarked at Calais, and landed at Dover, February 1st, "where," observes Monstrelet, "Katherine was received as if she had been an angel of God."

The magnificent coronation of the queen took place as early after her landing as the 24th of February. She was led on foot from Westminster Palace to the abbey, between two bishops, and was crowned by the hands of archbishop Chichely, on the 24th of February, 1421. It is expressly mentioned that Katherine sat on the King's Bench at Westminster Hall, by Henry's side, at the coronation feast.

"It is worth the noting," says old Raphael Holingshead, "to take a view of all the goodly order and reverend dutifulness exhibited on all sides, towards the new queen. After the coronation was ended, queen Katherine was conveyed into the great hall of Westminster, and there sat at dinner. Upon her right hand sat, at the end of the table, the archbishop of Canterbury and cardinal Beaufort. Upon the left hand of the queen sat James I., king of Scotland,<sup>4</sup> under his canopy, who was served

<sup>1</sup> Monstrelet.

<sup>2</sup> Parliamentary History, vol. ii. p. 165.

<sup>3</sup> Monstrelet.

<sup>4</sup> The royal minstrel, James Stuart, who had been captive in England since his boyhood; he was given a careful education at Windsor by Henry IV., and wrote many beautiful poems, taking for his models Chaucer and Gower, whom he calls his "maistres dear." From the top of the Maiden's Tower in Windsor Castle he fell in love with Joanna Beaufort, half-niece to Henry V., whom he saw walking in the garden below. Queen Katherine's friendship gave a turn to his adverse fortunes.

with messes in covered silver dishes, but after the aforesaid bishops. By the king of Scots sat the duchess of York<sup>1</sup> and the countess of Huntingdon. The countess of Kent sat under the table, at the queen's feet, holding a napkin. The earl of March, holding a sceptre in his hand, kneeled on the steps of the dais at the queen's right side; the earl marshal, holding her other sceptre, knelt at her left. The duke of Gloucester was that day overseer of the feast, and stood before queen Katherine bare-headed. Sir Richard Neville was her cupbearer; sir James Stuart, sewer; the lord Clifford, pander, in the earl of Warwick's stead; the lord Grey of Ruthin was her naperer; and the lord Audley her almoner, instead of the earl of Cambridge." "And ye shall understand," says alderman Fabian, "that this feast was all of fish; for, being February 24th, Lent was entered upon, and nothing of meat was there, saving brawn, served with mustard." Among the fish dishes of the first course, Fabian mentions especially *dead eels stewed*.

The table ornaments, called subtleties, were contrived to express by their mottoes a political meaning. In the first course was an image of St. Katherine, the queen's patron saint, disputing with the doctors, holding a label in her right hand, on which was written *madame la reine*, and a pelican held an answer in her bill to this effect:—

C'est la signe et du roy	In this sign the king
Parer tenez joy,	Great joy will bring,
Et tout sa gent	And all his people
Elle mette sa content.	She (madame the queen) will content.

The second course of this fish banquet was jelly, coloured with columbine flowers; white pottage, or cream of almonds; bream of the sea; conger; soles; cheven, or chubb; barbel, with roach; smelt, fried; crayfish, or lobster; leche, damasked with the king's motto or word flourished, "*Une sans plus*;" lamprey, fresh baked; *flampayne*, flourished with a scutcheon royal, and therein three crowns of gold planted with fleurs-de-lis and flowers of camomile, all wrought of confections (confectionary), and a subtlety named a panter (panther), with an image of St. Katherine, having a wheel in her hand, with this motto:—

La reyne nra fille	The queen my daughter
In cette ile	In this island
Per bon reason	Has with good reason
Aie renown.	Renown.

The third course was likewise of fish. A leche,<sup>2</sup> called the white leche, flourished with hawthorn leaves and red haws; dates in compost; mottled cream; carp, turbot, tench; perch, with gudgeon; fresh sturgeon, with wilks; porpoise, roasted (which Fabian, because the dish was not barbarous enough in itself, calls porporous). Then there was crevisse d'eau (crab-fish); prawns; eels roasted, with lamprey; and a march-pane, garnished with divers figures of angels, among which was set an image of St. Barnabas, holding this poesie, giving hopes of peace, as well as that the royal wedlock would be happy:—

<sup>1</sup> With w to Edward duke of York.

<sup>2</sup> Strained jelly. The word "leche" is still used in Suffolk for a strainer.

Il est escrit,  
 Pur voir et eil,  
 Per mariage pure  
 C'est guerre ne dure.

It is written,  
 It may be seen and is,  
 In marriage pure  
 No strifes endure.

And, lastly, there was a subtlety, named a *tigre*, looking in a mirror, and a man on horseback clean armed, holding a tiger's whelp in his hands, with this motto :—*Per force sans reason je prise cette beste*: "By force of arms, and not by that of reason, have I captured this beast." The small tiger and the motto meant an uncivil allusion to Katherine's young brother, the dauphin; the figure made show of throwing mirrors at the great tiger, which held in his paw this *reason* (label with motto):—

Gile che mirrouir  
 Ma festa distour.

The sight of this mirror  
 Tames wild beasts of terror.

The only instance of active benevolence ever recorded of Katherine the Fair, took place at this coronation feast, when the queen publicly interceded with her monarch-bridegroom for the liberation of his royal guest and prisoner, James I. of Scotland, then at table. This suit seems to have been granted, on condition that James should bear arms under Henry V.'s banner, for the purpose of completing the subjugation of France.<sup>1</sup> Katherine likewise took in hand the management of the love-affairs of the accomplished king of Scotland; and, through her agency, hopes were held out to the gallant James, that if he gave satisfaction to king Henry in the ensuing campaign, he need not despair of possessing the beautiful Joanna Beaufort, with whom he was so desperately enamoured. Stow affirms that this lady was betrothed to king James before the festivals of Katherine's coronation ended. Katherine presented sir James Stuart with the gilt cup with which he served her as sewer at the coronation.<sup>2</sup>

After the festivals had concluded, the queen was left by Henry in her palace of Westminster till Palm Sunday, when she removed to Windsor, expecting to meet the king, who had promised to pass Easter with her at the castle. Henry, however, found it impossible to return from the north, whither he had gone on progress; he therefore sent for the queen to Leicester, where they celebrated the spring festival; they then continued the progress together, visiting the shrines of all northern saints.

<sup>1</sup> This was done, but it is certain that James made the ensuing campaign as a private knight; for his subjects were fighting for the dauphin, under the earl of Buchan, son to his usurping uncle, the duke of Albany. This Scotch army soon after gave to England the first reverse they had met in France, at Baugy, where—

Swinton laid the lance in rest  
 That tamed of yore the sparkling crest  
 Of Clarence's Plantagenet.

Sir John Swinton, of Swinton, unhorsed the duke of Clarence, and wounded him in the face; the earl of Buchan afterwards killed him with a blow of his truncheon, but to the gallant Swinton certainly belongs the chivalric part of the victory. The late Swinton, of Swinton, descendant of sir John, gave the spear which achieved this conquest to sir Walter Scott, and it is now to be seen at Abbotsford.

<sup>2</sup> *Excerpta Historica*, p. 278.

Henry was so superfluous in his devotions, and so stern in suppressing all the satirical writings of the Lollards against the clergy, that the Reformers gave him the sobriquet of the "prince of the priests."<sup>1</sup>

The object of the king in this progress was to prepare his people for the extraordinary supplies he meant to request, at the ensuing parliament. For this purpose he harangued the corporations of every town through which he passed; and showing them his fair queen as a proof of the progress he had made in the conquest of France, he explained to them, with great eloquence, what forces and funds it would take to complete it.

Henry proceeded no further northward than the shrine of St. John of Beverley. While he was offering to that popular saint, he left his queen at the royal castle of Pontefract,<sup>2</sup> that fearful fortress where her sister Isabella's first husband, Richard II., had met with his mysterious death, and where that sister's second husband, and her own cousin-german, the poet duke of Orleans, was then enduring a strict captivity. It may be inferred that queen Katherine was permitted to see this near relative, or Henry would scarcely have taken her to his place of abode. Katherine returned to Westminster in May, 1421, when the king met his parliament.

Soon after, the disastrous news arrived of the defeat and death, at the fatal field of Baugy, of that stainless knight, the king's best beloved brother, Thomas, duke of Clarence. Henry had not intended to leave England till after the birth of the heir, which the situation of his young queen led him to expect; but now, burning to avenge Clarence,<sup>3</sup> he hurried to France, June 10, leaving his Katherine in the care of the duke of Bedford. He laid one especial command on his wife at his parting, which was, not to let his heir be born at Windsor.

Our chroniclers lead us to suppose that the king himself had examined the aspect of the planets, according to the vain rules of art: for the expression always is, "that he prophesied<sup>4</sup> the calamities of Henry VI." Now, if it was a marvel that Saul was among the prophets, it would be one still greater to find our gallant Plantagenet king assuming the prophet's mantle; unless, indeed, during his education at Oxford, he had, among other trash then considered learning, acquired the art of casting horoscopes. Be this as it may, Henry, from some mysterious reason, deemed that destiny lowered darkly over the royal towers of Windsor,

<sup>1</sup> White Kennet, reign Henry V., vol. ii. p. 163.

<sup>2</sup> White Kennet, *ibid.* In the elegant edition of Monstrelet's *Chronicles*, published by Smith, Fleet Street, 1840, there is a beautiful wood-cut purporting to be a portrait of queen Katherine, copied from a sculpture on an old oak chest at York. The figure of the queen is noble and graceful, the costume perfectly agreeing with the times, excepting the amplitude of the draperies. If authentic, the sculpture is a relic of this progress, and, if it could be proved to be such, would be deeply interesting to the author of this life.—Note to this edition of 1844.

<sup>3</sup> As the Scottish army had defeated Clarence, he hung every Scotchman he took in arms in France, under pretence that they were fighting against their king James, who followed the English banner as a private knight.

<sup>4</sup> Speed. Stow. Fabian. Holingshed.

during the month when he expected Katherine to bring forth her first-born.<sup>1</sup> It is certain, however, that Katherine disobeyed her royal lord, either from want of belief in astrology, or because she chose that her child should first see the light in that stately fortress, where his great and fortunate ancestor, Edward III., was born.

On the 6th of December, 1421, the son of Katherine came into a world which assuredly proved most disastrous to him. When the news was brought to Henry V. that Katherine had brought him an heir, he was prosecuting the siege of Meaux. He eagerly inquired "where the boy was born?" and being answered "at Windsor," the king repeated with a sigh to his chamberlain, lord Fitzhugh, the following oracular stave, which certainly does little honour to his talents as an *improviser* :—

"1, Henry, born at Monmouth,  
Shall small time reign and much get;  
But Henry of Windsor shall long reign and lose all.  
But as God will, so be it."<sup>2</sup>

No regular English dower was at this time settled on Katherine, but it is evident that the revenues of the unfortunate queen-dowager were confiscated for her use, as her maids were paid from that source. Her damsels were, Joanna Belknap, Joanna Troutbeck, and Joanna Courcy, besides Agnes, who has no surname. "These ladies," says Henry, "the demoiselles of our dear companion, are to receive ten *livres* a-piece out of the funds of queen Johane.<sup>3</sup> Guillemote, damsel of the bed-chamber to his said dear companion, is to receive one hundred shillings from the moneys of queen Joanna." Not very honest of the valiant Henry, to pay his wife's servants with another person's money.

These gifts are declared to be in consideration of the "costages and expenses the beloved demoiselles are incurring, by following the said dear queen and companion to meet me, king Henry, in France." Likewise an annuity of twenty *livres*<sup>4</sup> per annum "for that dear doctor of philosophy, Maister Johan Boyers, because of his office of confessor to queen Katherine." The revenue of the unfortunate dowager was likewise taxed, for the maintenance of Katherine's guest, Jacqueline of Hainault,<sup>5</sup> to the enormous amount of a hundred pounds per month.

<sup>1</sup> Speed. Stow. Fabian. Holingshed.

<sup>2</sup> White Kennet. Trussell's Chronicle of Henry V., vol. i. p. 336. Most of the chroniclers who wrote during the latter part of Henry's VI.'s reign to Henry VII.'s era, mention this singular piece of court gossip. If the saying was indeed prevalent from the commencement of the life of Henry VI., it must have fought more fatally against the Red Rose than an army with banners. It is well worthy of observation how completely these oracular sayings brought their own fulfilment, by the peculiar bias they gave to the minds of men; hope was raised on one side, and despair induced on the other, and thus predictions were fulfilled by natural causes.

<sup>3</sup> *Fædera*, p. 204, vol. x. The deed is in Norman French. We think the word "*livres*" means English pounds sterling.

<sup>4</sup> *Fædera*, vol. x. p. 134.

<sup>5</sup> This princess had eloped from a bridegroom whom she hated, and had taken refuge at the court of Katherine, with whom she lived on great terms of intimacy.

Henry directs the treasurer of his exchequer to pay to his dearly beloved cousin, *Dame Jake*, duchess of Holland, this sum from the profits of the dower of Joanna, late queen of England.

Before Katherine left England, her infant was baptized by the name of his father, the duchess Jacqueline standing godmother; the duke of Bedford, and cardinal Beaufort, were the other sponsors.

Early in the same spring Katherine wrote her warlike lord a most loving letter, declaring that she earnestly longed to behold him once more. This epistle was answered by a permission to join him in France.

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## KATHERINE OF VALOIS,

SURNAMED THE FAIR,

CONSORT OF HENRY V.

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### CHAPTER II.

Queen Katherine joins Henry V.—Her court at Paris—Death of Henry V.—Grief of the queen—She presides over the funeral—Follows the corpse—Arrives in England—Is at the expense of Henry V.'s tomb at Westminster Abbey—Queen and her infant son (Henry VI.)—He travels to London on her lap—Her London residence—Last public appearance—Infancy of Henry VI.—Katherine retires from public life—Attachment to Owen Tudor—He dances before her—Introduction of his kinsmen—Queen's remarks—Ruby ring—Birth of second family—Death of her mother—Marriage discovered—Imprisonment—Illness—Penitence—Present from her son—Dictates her will—Death—Burial—Original epitaph—Persecution of her husband—Children—Death of Owen Tudor—Grandson of Katherine (Henry VII.)—New epitaph—Katherine's body exhumed—Made a spectacle for three centuries—Peppy kisses her remains—Re-interred.

QUEEN KATHERINE crossed the sea, and landed at Harfleur, on the 21st of May, 1422, escorted by the duke of Bedford, and an army of twenty thousand men, destined to complete the conquest of her unhappy country. At the head of this mighty reinforcement she traversed France, in royal state.

Henry left Meaux, which he had just captured,<sup>1</sup> as soon as he heard of the landing of his queen, and advanced with her father and mother to meet her; they met at the castle of Vincennes, where she was received by her husband and parents, as if she had been somewhat more

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macy. Jacqueline was in hopes that the pope would dissolve her forced marriage, and consent to her union with Katherine's handsome brother-in-law, Humphrey, duke of Gloucester.

<sup>1</sup> Stow's Annals.

than mortal. She had left her little infant in England, under the care of its uncle, the duke of Gloucester.<sup>1</sup>

Great rejoicings were made at Paris for the arrival of the queen of England, and the birth of the heir of Henry. The royal party left Vincennes,<sup>2</sup> and entered Paris in great magnificence, that day being Whitsun eve, May 30th. Queen Katherine, with her train, were lodged at the Louvre, while her mother and king Charles took up their abode at the Hôtel de St. Paul. "And on Whit Sunday queen Katherine sat at table at the Louvre, gloriously apparelled, having her crown on her head. The English princes and nobles were partakers with the great lords of France at this feast, each seated according to his rank, while the tables were covered with the richest viands and wines. Queen Katherine next day held a great court, and all the Parisians went to see their princess, and her lord sitting enthroned, crowned with their most precious diadems; but," continues Monstrelet, "as no meat or drink was offered to the populace, they went away much discontented. For when, of old, the kings of France kept open court, much good cheer was freely given to all comers. King Charles VI. had once been as courteous and liberal as any of his predecessors; but now he was seated at a table with his queen, quite forsaken by his nobles, who all flocked to pay their court to his daughter and her husband, at which the common people grieved much." Katherine likewise gave great offence by having the *ermes* carried before her coach, as if she had been the sovereign of France.<sup>3</sup>

The last year's harassing warfare had greatly injured the constitution of Henry V. He was ill when his queen arrived, but he paid no regard to his failing health—he scarcely allowed himself a day's repose.

But conquest, empire, and all worldly things, were fast fleeing from the grasp of the warlike lord of Katherine the Fair. At Senlis he was seized with a mortal distemper. He struggled fiercely against its encroachments, for he daily expected to hear of a battle between his friend, the duke of Burgundy, and the dauphin, and hoped to assist his ally in person. He had even assumed his armour, and marched as far as Melun; but the strong hand of disease was too powerful even for the energies of his mighty mind. Sorely smitten with illness, he was obliged to give up his march; and, the malady increasing every minute, he was forced to be carried back to Senlis in a litter. He had left his queen at Senlis, but for greater security she had retired to her father's castle in the wood of Vincennes; thither the "mighty victor, mighty lord," was carried to her, helpless, on that litter which was almost a funeral couch to him.

In the castle of Vincennes, near Paris, which has so often been the theatre of the destinies of France, Katherine and her mother attended the last hours of Henry V.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Speed.

<sup>2</sup> Monstrelet.

<sup>3</sup> Goodwin. It is difficult to guess what the *ermes* implied.

<sup>4</sup> Those who trace closely the locality of Katherine and her mother will be convinced that they were with Henry at the Bois de Vincennes; for Monstrelet

He made a very penitential end, but was so little conscious of his blood-guiltiness, that when his confessor was reading the seven Psalms in the service for the dying, he stopped him when he came to the verse. "Build thou the walls of Jerusalem," with an earnest protestation, "that when he had completed his conquests in Europe, he always intended to undertake a crusade." When he had arranged his affairs, he asked his physicians "how long he had to live?" One of them replied, on his knees, "that, without a miracle, he could not survive two hours at the most."

"Comfort my dear wife," he said to the duke of Bedford, "the most afflicted creature living."<sup>1</sup> In a will he made on his death-bed, he leaves Katherine a gold sceptre. He expired on the 31st of August, 1422.

Henry was a learned prince, but he had the bad habit of borrowing books and never returning them. After his death a petition was sent to the regency by the lady Westmoreland, his relative, praying that her "Chronicles of Jerusalem," and the "Expedition of Godfrey of Boulogne," borrowed of her by the late king, might be returned. The prior of Christchurch, likewise, sent in a most pitiful complaint, that he had lent the works of St. Gregory to his dear lord, king Henry, who had never restored them to him, their rightful owner.

In person Henry V. was tall and agile, and so swift of foot, that he could, with the aid of two of his lords, capture deer in the royal enclosures, without the assistance of dogs. His portraits possess that distinctive character which proves personal resemblance; his features are regular, though very strongly marked; the perceptive brow denotes the great general; the eyes are majestic and overpowering; the nose well cut, but stern in the expression of the nostril; the mouth wide, but closely pressed, and the haughty upper lip curls with no very benevolent expression. There is a great development of frontal brain in his portraits: they are all profiles, excepting that over the chantry at Westminster Abbey, which has a wen on the right side of the neck.

At the time of Henry's death, his fair widow had not attained her twenty-first year. Her affection was, as the dying hero observed to his brother, most violent, but it certainly proved in the end rather evanescent.

The funeral of Henry V. was arranged and conducted by queen Katherine, with all the pomp of woe.<sup>2</sup> "His body was laid on a chariot drawn by four great horses. Just above the dead corpse they placed a figure made of boiled leather, presenting his person as nigh as might be devised, painted curiously to the semblance of a living creature, on whose head was put an imperial diadem of gold and precious stones;

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brings Henry to Katherine's care at Senlis, and affirms her mother was with the hero, when he retired to die at the palace near Paris, most used as a residence by the royal family. Was it likely he would leave his wife at the camp? Besides, he points out the affliction of Katherine to his brother, and Katherine immediately appears, as chief mourner, in the funeral rites of her departed lord.

<sup>1</sup> Speed.

<sup>2</sup> Stow.



on its body, a purple robe furred with ermine; in the right hand, a sceptre royal; in the left, an orb of gold, with a cross fixed thereon. And, thus adorned, was this figure laid in a bed on the same chariot, with the visage uncovered towards the heavens; and the coverture of this bed was of red, beaten with gold; and besides, when the body should pass through any good town, a canopy of marvellous value was borne over it, by men of great worship. In this manner he was accompanied by the king of Scots, as chief mourner,<sup>1</sup> and by all the princes, lords, and knights of his house, in vestures of deep mourning. At a distance from the corpse of about two English miles, followed the widow, queen Katherine, right honourably accompanied. The body rested at the church of St. Olfian, in Abbeville, where masses were sung, by the queen's orders, for the repose of Henry's soul, from the dawn of morning till the close of night. The procession moved through Abbeville with increased pomp. The duke of Exeter, the earl of March, sir Louis Robsart, the queen's knight, and many nobles, bore the banners of the saints. The hatchments were carried by twelve renowned captains; and around the bier-car rode four hundred men-at-arms in black armour, their horses barbed black, their lances held with the points downwards. A great company clothed in white, bearing wax-torches, lighted, encompassed the procession. The queen, with a mighty retinue, came after at a mile's distance." Thus she passed, keeping her husband's corpse in view, through Hesdin, Montreuil, and Boulogne, till they came to Calais, where, on the 12th of October, the privy council had ordered vessels to meet the queen, with ladies to attend her.<sup>2</sup>

When the queen, after landing at Dover with the royal corpse, approached London, she was met by fifteen bishops in their pontifical habits, and by many abbots in their mitres and vestments, with a vast crowd of priests and people. The priests chanted all the way from Blackheath, and through the streets of the city, hymns for their dead king. A general and picturesque illumination was effected, by each householder standing at his door with a torch in his hand. The princes of the royal family rode in mournful postures next the funeral car. The grief of the young queen greatly edified the people, and they were still more impressed by the barbarian magnificence of the tomb she raised to the memory of their royal hero; on which a Latin inscription expressed "that it was raised by his queen, Katherine." The famous silver-plated statue, with the head of solid silver gilt, was placed on the tomb of Henry V. at the expense of his widow.<sup>3</sup>

Directly after the obsequies of her husband, Katherine retired to Windsor Castle,<sup>4</sup> to embrace her babe, and pass the first weeks of her widowhood. Her little child was eight months old, on the day of his warlike

<sup>1</sup> Goodwin's Life of Henry.

<sup>2</sup> Minutes of Privy Council, vol. iii. p. 5. These documents tacitly confirm the assertion of Speed, that the little king Henry VI. was left in England; for no preparation is made for his reception, nor is the royal infant even mentioned in any of the arrangements for meeting his dead father and mourning mother at Dover, excepting that all orders are effected in his name.

<sup>3</sup> Goodwin. Stow. Speed. Weever.

<sup>4</sup> Speed.

father's death. When the parliament met, she removed to London, and passed through the city, on a moving throne drawn by white horses, and surrounded by all the princes and nobles of England. The infant king was seated on her lap, "and those pretty hands," says one of our quaint chroniclers, "which could not yet feed himself, were made capable of wielding a sceptre; and he, who was beholden to nurses for milk, did distribute sustenance to the law and justice of his nation. The queen, with her infant on her knee, was enthroned among the lords, whom, by the chancellor, the little king saluted, and spoke to them at large his mind, by means of another's tongue." The king conducted himself with extraordinary quietness and gravity, considering he had not yet attained the age of twelve months.

Henry did not always behave so orderly, as that curious annal, the London Chronicle, thus bears grave testimony:—"This year (1423), upon Saturday, the 13th of November, the king and his mother removed from Windsor to hold a parliament in London. At night, the king and his mother, the queen, lodged at Staines, and upon the morrow, being Sunday, the king being borne towards his mother's car, he skreeked, he cried, he sprang, and would be carried no further; wherefore they bore him again to the inn, and there he abode the Sunday all day."

The chronicler certainly means to insinuate that all this violence was because the royal babe, by a holy instinct, would not break the Sabbath by travelling, and therefore made this notable resistance, by shrieking and kicking, when he was carried to his mother's car. In all probability he had been well amused at the inn at Staines, and did not wish to leave it.

"On the Monday," continues the chronicler of London, "he was borne to his mother's car or chair, he being then glad and merry of cheer, and so they came to Kingston, and rested that night. On the Tuesday queen Katherine brought him to Kennington. On Wednesday he came to London, and with glad semblance and merry cheer on his mother's barm<sup>2</sup> (lap) in the car, rode through London to Westminster, and on the morrow was so brought into parliament."

Katherine left Westminster with her infant, and retired to Waltham Palace, November 26th, and from thence to Hertford, where she kept her Christmas with her friend, James I. of Scotland,<sup>3</sup> whom she had the pleasure of seeing united, at St. Mary's, Southwark, soon after, to the lady he passionately loved, and whose happiness she had kindly promoted.

Katherine's dower was not settled by Act of Parliament until the second year of her infant's reign. She appears to have been put in possession of all the ancient dower palaces belonging to the queens of England, with the exception of Havering Bower and Langley, where resided the queen-dowager, widow to Henry IV.

"In the third year of the reign of Henry VI. was granted to his dearest

<sup>1</sup> Chronicles of London, p. 111 (date 1423).

<sup>2</sup> Barm is an ancient word signifying lap. An apron is by our early writers termed barm-cloth.

<sup>3</sup> Chron. of London, 112 and 165.

mother Katherine, all that inn or hospitium in the city of London, where his dear cousin the earl of March, lately deceased, used to reside; and that she may have possession of it during the minority of his dear cousin, Richard duke of York, on condition that she keeps in good repair all the buildings and gardens, and is at all charges concerning them." There is reason to suppose that this was Baynard's Castle.

This year, Katherine,<sup>1</sup> and her mother, Isabeau of Bavaria, were entreated on the part of England and France to act as mediatrices between Humphrey duke of Gloucester and Philip duke of Burgundy, who had challenged each other to mortal combat. Duke Humphrey insisted on retaining, as his wife, Jacqueline the heiress of Holland, who had formerly thrown herself on Katherine's protection. Katherine, being the intimate friend of all the parties, succeeded in preventing the duel.<sup>2</sup>

Two days before the opening of parliament in 1425, Katherine entered the city in a chair of state, with her child sitting on her knee. When they arrived at the west door of St. Paul's Cathedral, the duke-protector lifted the infant king from his chair and set him on his feet, and then, with the duke of Exeter, led him between them, up the stairs going into the choir; from whence the royal infant was carried to the high altar, where he kneeled for a time, a traverse having been prepared for him. It is expressly said, "that he looked gravely and sadly about him." And then he was borne into the churchyard, and there set upon a fair courser, to the infinite delight of the people, and so conveyed, through Cheapside to St. George's Bar, to his own manor of Kennington. At Kennington Palace, Katherine and her royal son reposed till the 30th of April, when they set out on a grand procession through the city to Westminster Palace. The little king was held on a great white horse, and the people flocked in multitudes to see him, declaring he had the features of his father, and loading him with blessings. Being come to the palace, Katherine seated herself on the throne in the white-hall, where the house of lords was held, with the infant sovereign on her lap.<sup>3</sup>

Our warlike barons were not a little embarrassed by the mutations of this world, which had snatched from them a leader of singular energies, both as monarch and warrior, and, placing a little babe at their head, made them directors of a nursery. The chivalric earl of Warwick had the guardianship of the king's person at a very early age; a fact illustrated by a beautiful contemporary drawing in the pictorial history of the earl.<sup>4</sup> He is represented holding the king, a most lovely infant of fourteen months old, in his arms, while he is showing him to the peers in parliament. One of the lords is presenting the infant monarch with the orb. The royal babe is curiously surveying it, and, with an arch look, gently placing one dimpled hand upon the symbol of sovereignty, seems doubtful whether it is to be treated with reverence, or chucked, like a

<sup>1</sup> Monstrelet.

<sup>2</sup> The king's *moder* and his *aicule* are entreated by the English parliament to effect a peace.—Parliamentary History, vol. ii. p. 197.

<sup>3</sup> Parliamentary History, 191, and Holingshed.

<sup>4</sup> See the preceding memoir. Beauchamp Pictorial Chronicle.

common ball, into the midst of the august assembly. Another representation of the earl of Warwick gives us an idea of the costume of royal infants in the middle ages; for the limners of that age drew what they saw before them, and invented nothing. Warwick is delineated in the Rous Roll,<sup>1</sup> holding his royal charge on his arm. The babe is about eighteen months old; he is attired in a little crimson velvet gown, and has on his head a velvet cap, turned up with a miniature crown; moreover, he holds a toy sceptre in his baby hand, which he looks much inclined to whisk about the head of the stout earl, who is so amiably performing the office of a nursery-maid. It is to be presumed that the earl carried the little king on all state occasions, while his governess, dame Alice Boteler, and his nurse, Joan Astley, had possession of him in his hours of retirement.

In a very naïvely worded document, the privy council, writing as if the king were giving his directions to his governess himself, requests dame Alice "from time to time reasonably to chastise us, as the case may require, without being held accountable or molested for the same, at any future time. The well-beloved dame Alice (being a very wise and expert person) is to teach us courtesy, and nurture (good manners), and many things convenient for our royal person to learn."<sup>2</sup>

After these arrangements were effected, Katherine the Fair retires behind a cloud so mysterious, that for thirteen years of her life we have no public document which tells of her actions; and the biographer is forced to wander in search of particulars into the pleasant, but uncertain regions of tradition and private anecdote.

Deep obscurity hangs over the birth and origin of Katherine's second husband, Owen Tudor. Some historians declare that the father of Owen was a brewer at Beaumaris.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, he drew his line from a prince of North Wales, called Theodore; which, pronounced according to the Saxon tongue, was corrupted into Tudor, and even to the meaner sound of Tidder. There is an ancient house in the county of Anglesey, called Glengauny, still pointed out as the residence of Owen Tudor,<sup>4</sup> and the Welsh say that he possessed there property to the amount of three thousand pounds per annum. But this wealthy heritage is by no means consistent with the assertion of his accurate countryman, Pen-nant, who has proved that Meredith, the father of Owen, was the fourth son of a younger son, of the line of Tudor, and that he filled no higher office than that of *scutifer*, or shield-bearer, to a bishop of Bangor. When in this office, Meredith, either by design or accident, killed a man;

<sup>1</sup> See the original in the Herald's College.

<sup>2</sup> Many of the infant nobility were educated at the palace with their little sovereign; for provision is made by the privy council for their reception, and the entertainment of their tutors. The king was taken out of feminine dominion in his seventh year, and consigned wholly to the management of his governor, the earl of Warwick, who is "to teach us nurture (good manners), literature, and languages, and to chastise us from time to time according to his discretion." However, Henry, mild as he was, rebelled against the chastisement, and the privy council were forced to interfere.—Privy Council, vol. iii. 297.

<sup>3</sup> Rapin.

<sup>4</sup> Boswell's Antiquities.

and, being outlawed, fled with his wife to the fastnesses of Snowdon where Owen Glendower upheld the banner of defiance, against the house of Lancaster. If young Owen were not born in this stronghold of freedom, he was probably baptized there: for a tradition declares, that he was godson to the great chief, Glendower. He was thus brought up from his cradle as a hardy, predatory soldier.

The next fact regarding Owen, is, that he certainly belonged to the brave Welsh band with whom Henry V. most prudently entered into amicable terms, on the death of the warlike Glendower. These hardy warriors, it is well known, under the command of Davy the One-eyed,<sup>1</sup> did good service at Agincourt. Tradition says that young Owen Tudor aided his countrymen in repelling the fiery charge of Alençon, and that Henry V. made him, for his bravery, one of the squires of his body;<sup>2</sup> hence his title of armiger.<sup>3</sup> There is great reason to suppose, that the brave and handsome Owen fought only as a common soldier in the Welsh band. But when once he had received the preferment of squire of the body to Henry V., he certainly continued the same office about the person of the infant king, and hence his acquaintance with the queen-mother.

In this station Owen Tudor is next found keeping guard on the infant king and his mother, at Windsor Castle, and very soon after the death of Henry V. it appears the handsome Welsh soldier attracted the attention of the royal widow of England. Owen did not certainly possess forty pounds per annum at this time: if he had, he must have taken up his knighthood.

While Owen was on guard at Windsor, on some festival, he was required to dance<sup>4</sup> before the queen; and, making too elaborate a pirouette, he was not able to recover his balance, but fell into the queen's lap, as she sat upon a low seat,<sup>5</sup> with all her ladies about her. The queen's manner of excusing this awkwardness gave her ladies the first suspicion that she was not entirely insensible to the attractions of the brave Welshman. As her passion increased, and she indulged herself in greater intimacy with the object of it, those of her ladies, who could take the liberty, remonstrated with the queen, and represented "how much she lowered herself by paying any attention to a person, who, though possessing some personal accomplishments and advantages, had no princely, nor even gentle alliances, but belonged to a barbarous clan of savages, reckoned inferior to the lowest English yeomen." Upon which the queen declared, "that being a Frenchwoman, she had not been aware that there was any difference of race in the British island."

Afterwards, communicating these strictures to her lover, he held forth very eloquently concerning his high-born kin and princely descent, and

<sup>1</sup> Davy Gam, brother-in-law to Glendower.

<sup>2</sup> Stow's Annals. These squires of the body guarded the person of the sovereign; they were probably the origin of the gentlemen-at-arms. Several of the Welsh band of Gam were thus promoted.

<sup>3</sup> Owen is entitled armiger, or squire, in the *Fœdera*, but never knight.

<sup>4</sup> Stow's Annals.

<sup>5</sup> This low seat indicates that the infant Henry was in presence.

the queen requested him to introduce some of his princely relatives at her court of Windsor Castle. "Whereupon," says sir John Wynne, "he brought into her presence, John ap Meredith, and Howel ap Llewellyn, his near cousins, men of the goodliest stature and personage, but wholly destitute of bringing up and nurture (education): for when the queen had spoken to them in divers languages, and they were not able to answer her, she said, 'they were the goodliest dumb creatures she ever saw;' a proof that Katherine knew several languages, but had no skill in Welsh."

The precise time when Katherine's love led her to espouse the Welsh soldier, it is impossible to ascertain; what priest married them, and in what holy place their hands were united, no document exists to prove; and strange it is, that Henry VII., with all his elaborate boast of royal descent, should not have left some intimation of the time and place of the marriage of Katherine and Owen. All chroniclers of the Tudor era assert confidently that the marriage of the queen-mother and Owen Tudor was at least tacitly acknowledged in the sixth year of her son's reign. Modern historians implicitly follow them, yet there was not a shadow of acknowledgment of the marriage; but in the sixth year of her son's reign some suspicions arose in the mind of the protector, Humphrey of Gloucester, that the queen meant to degrade herself by an unsuitable alliance, and a severe statute was enacted, threatening with the heaviest penalties, "any one who should dare to marry a queen-dowager, or any lady who held lands of the crown, without the consent of the king and his council."<sup>2</sup>

It is usually affirmed "that the regency had ascertained that the queen was married when this law was enacted." It is possible that such might be the case, but they had not assuredly discovered the object of her attachment; otherwise would they have suffered Owen to abide as an inmate of Katherine's household, till at least within the last six months of her life?—a fact incontestably proved by the Minutes of the Privy Council.<sup>3</sup> He was clerk of her wardrobe, according to the assertion of a great historical antiquary.

Soon after the prohibitory statute was passed, the queen brought an action against the bishop of Carlisle, for some encroachment on her dower lands. Her cause was carried on in her own name, without the slightest allusion to any second husband.

<sup>1</sup> History of the Gwydyr Family.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Edward Coke is the authority that this statute was passed, "but it was never printed," he says, nor does it appear to have been seen by him. The Parliamentary History, vol. ii. p. 211, expressly declares it is not on the Rolls; it was probably struck off by the authority of Henry VII., because it tended to illegitimise his father. Sir Harris Nicolas has shown, that in order to make the deception more complete, all the membranes or sections were falsely numbered! Sandford declares, that the clergy agreed to this bill only so far "as it contradicted not the laws of God and of the church, and that no deadly sin should be occasioned by it;" a clause, which proves there was a suspicion that some marriage displeasing to the crown had already taken place.

<sup>3</sup> Privy Council, edited by sir Harris Nicolas, vol. v. p. 47.

An office like that borne by Owen Tudor was peculiarly liable to promote personal acquaintance between the queen and him: as clerk of the wardrobe, it was Owen's office not only to guard the queen's jewels from robbery, but to pay for, if not purchase, all materials for her dress.<sup>1</sup> Many serious consultations might have taken place on occasion of every new purchase or payment, as to the colours and style most becoming to the royal beauty, and compliments might be implied which the lowly lover could have no other opportunity of expressing.

The only notice that occurs of Katherine from the third year of her infant's reign, till 1436, is, that her son, then in his seventh year, by the advice of his governess, Alice Boteler, presented his mother, for a New-year's gift, with the ruby ring given him by his uncle, the duke of Bedford.<sup>2</sup>

Katherine's life of retirement enabled her to conceal her marriage for many years, and to give birth, without any very notorious scandal, to three sons successively. The eldest was born at the royal manor-house of Hadham; from the place of his birth he is called Edmund of Hadham. The second was Jasper of Hatfield, from another of the royal residences. The third, Owen, first saw the light at some inconvenient season, when Katherine was forced to appear at the royal palace of Westminster. The babe was carried at once into the monastery, where he was reared, and afterwards professed a monk.

While Katherine was devoting herself to conjugal affection and maternal duties, performed by stealth, her royal son was crowned, in his eighth year, king of England, at Westminster, with great pomp, in which his mother took no share. The next year he crossed the sea, in order to be crowned at Paris. It is natural to suppose that queen Katherine accompanied her son, and supported his claims on her native crown, by her personal influence; but no traces are to be found of her presence.

Her mother was alive in Paris, full of years, and, it must be added, of dishonours. The English princes and lords did not condescend to introduce their little king to the degraded woman, and the maternal grandmother of Henry VI. became first known to the son of her daughter, by kissing her hand<sup>3</sup> and making a reverential courtesy to him at a *croissée* (window) of the Hôtel de St. Pol; after which it was not considered decent to forbid the young king's request to visit her, and an interview took place between queen Isabeau and her grandson.

Time wore on, and one disaster to the English in France followed another. They evacuated Paris just three days before the wicked queen Isabeau died. There was scarcely a person found to bury this once powerful princess. Katherine, though in the prime of life, being but thirty-five, survived her wretched mother only one year.

A strong suspicion of the queen's connexion with Tudor seems to have been first excited in the minds of Henry V.'s guardians, towards the

<sup>1</sup> The clerks of the wardrobe bought jewels and cloth of gold for the queen or princesses. See Richard Clifford's purchases for the lady Philippa, daughter of Henry IV., when she married Eric king of Sweden.—Issue Rolls, pp. 303, 4

<sup>2</sup> Privy Council, vol. iii. p. 285.

<sup>3</sup> Monstrelet.

end of the summer of 1436; at which time Katherine either took refuge in the abbey of Bermondsey, or was sent there under some restraint. This event is supposed to have occurred just after the birth of her little daughter, Margaret, who lived but a few days. Anxiety of mind threw the queen into declining health, and she remained very ill at Bermondsey, during the autumn.

"The high spirit of the duke of Gloucester," says one of our historians,<sup>1</sup> "could not brook her marriage; neither the beauty of Tudor's person, nor his genealogy deduced from Cadwallader kings, could shield him or the queen from a sharp persecution as soon as the match was discovered."

The children, to whom queen Katherine had previously given birth in secret, were torn from her by the orders of the council, and consigned to the keeping of a sister of the earl of Suffolk.<sup>2</sup> This cruelty perhaps hastened the death of the unfortunate queen. The pitying nuns who attended her declared she was a sincere penitent, and among all other small sins she expressed the deepest contrition<sup>3</sup> for having disobeyed her royal husband Henry V., and perversely chosen the forbidden castle of Windsor as the birthplace of the heir of England. In her youth Katherine had evidently scorned the astrological oracle, "that Henry of Windsor shall lose all that Henry of Monmouth had gained;" but now, although the late disasters in France, and the lowering prospects in England, were plainly the natural consequences of a thirty years' war, superstition seized on the mind that had formerly rejected it: and Katherine, weakened by sorrow and suffering, devoutly believed that her forbidden accouchment at Windsor Castle was the reason of the ill-fortune of her son, Henry VI., and duly repented of her supposed crime on her death-bed.

While languishing between life and death, Katherine made her will, in terms which fully denote the deep depression of her spirits:—

"The last will of queen Katherine made unto our sovereign lord, her son, upon her departing out of this world."<sup>4</sup>

"Right high and mighty prince, and my full (re)doubted lord, and full entirely beloved son, in due humble wise, with full hearty natural blessing, I commend me to your highness. To the which please to be certified, that before the silent and fearful conclusion of this long, grievous malady, in the which I have been long, and yet am, troubled and vexed by the visitation of God (to whom be thanking and laud in all his gifts), I purpose, by the grace of God, and under your succour, protection, and comfort (in whom only, among all other earthly, stands all my trust), to ordain and dispose of my testament, both for my soul and my body.

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<sup>1</sup> It was the more cruel and unjust of Gloucester to persecute and torment his sister-in-law for having married a man of unblemished character, since he himself had formed a most degrading alliance with Eleanor Cobham, who had not only previously lived with him on disreputable terms, but had borne an infamous character. <sup>2</sup> Abbess of Barking, Katherine de la Pole. <sup>3</sup> Speed.

<sup>4</sup> This document has, as far as we know, never before been printed. It is partially injured by the fire that damaged the Cottonian MSS. in the last century but enough remains to be intelligible. Mr. Halliwell has kindly transcribed it in its exact language. The orthography alone has been altered, in its introduction into this biography. *Cottonian MS. Tiberius E. viii. fol. 221.*



"And I trust fully, and am right sure, that, among all creatures earthly, ye best may, and will best tender and favour my will, in ordaining for my soul and body, in seeing that my debts be paid and my servants guerdoned, and in *tender and favourable fulfilling of mine intent*.<sup>1</sup> Wherefore, tenderly I beseech you, at the reverence of God, and upon my full, hearty blessing, that to my perpetual comfort and health of soul and body, of your abundant and special grace (in full remedy of all means that in any wise may *ammentise*<sup>2</sup> or deface the effect of my last purpose and intent), grant at my humble prayer and request to be my executor; and to depute and assign such persons to be under you of your servants, or of mine, or of both, as it shall like you to chuse them, which I remit fully to your disposition and election. Beseeching you, also, at the reverence of our Lord God and the full entire blessing of me your mother, that, this done, ye tenderly and benignly grant my supplication and request, contained particularly in the articles ensuing.

"And if tender audience and favourable assent shall be given by so benign and merciful a lord and son to such a mother, being in (at) so piteous point of so grievous a malady, I remit to your full, high, wise, and noble discretion, and to the conscience of every creature that knoweth the laws of God and of nature, that if the mother should have more favour than a strange person, I remit (refer or appeal) to the same."

From the perusal of this solemn exhortation, a conclusion would naturally be drawn, that it was the preface to the earnest request of Katherine, for mercy to her husband, and nurture for her motherless infants. Yet the articles or items which follow contain not the slightest allusion to them. All her anxiety seems to be centred—firstly, in the payment of her creditors (without which she seems convinced that her soul will never get free); secondly, in obtaining many prayers and masses for her soul; and, thirdly, in payments being made and rewards given to her servants. If Katherine, by this mysterious document, really made any provision for her helpless family, it is all comprised in the dark hints to her son of acting "according to his noble discretion and her intents;" which intention, perhaps, had been confided to the young king in some interview previously to her imprisonment. There is no enumeration of property in the items that follow, excepting the portion of income due at the day of her departing. She declares that her soul "shall pass as naked, as desolate, and as willing to be scourged, as the poorest soul God ever formed."

This piteous exhortation to her son was written, or dictated, a few hours before her death; yet, even at her last gasp, she evidently dared not break regal etiquette so far as to name to her son her plebeian lord or her young children.

Whilst this pathetic document was in course of preparation, the dying queen received a token of remembrance from her son, king Henry, on New-year's day, consisting of a tablet of gold, weighing thirteen ounces, on which was a crucifix set with pearls and sapphires: it was bought of John Pottesby, goldsmith, and was sent to Katherine at Bermondsey.

<sup>1</sup> This is the only sentence which can be construed into an allusion to her family; here some intent, supposed to be known to the king, is implied—a mysterious clause evidently distinct from the previously enumerated portions of the sentence—viz., obituary and burial; paying her debts and rewarding her servants.

<sup>2</sup> This word seems to mean *impede*.

To use the poor queen's own pathetic words, "the silent and fearful conclusion of her long, grievous malady," took place on the 3d of January, 1437. When the news was brought to the young sovereign of his mother's death, he was on his throne, presiding in parliament.

Power was given to the poor queen's two persecutors, the cardinal of Winchester, and Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, to perform the office of executors.

Katherine was buried with all the pomp usual to her high station. Her body was removed to the church of her patroness, St. Katherine, by the Tower, where it laid in state, February 18th, 1437 : it then rested at St. Paul's, and was finally honourably buried in Our Lady's Chapel, at Westminster Abbey. Henry VI. piously erected an altar-tomb to her memory, on which was engraved a Latin epitaph, in all probability the same preserved in the pages of William of Worcester, of which the following is a translation :—

Death, daring spoiler of the world, has laid  
Within this tomb the noble clay that shined  
Queen Katherine's soul ; from the French king derived ;  
Of our fifth Henry, wife ; of the sixth  
Henry, mother. As maid and widow both,  
A perfect flower of modesty esteemed.  
Here, happy England, brought she forth that king,  
On whose auspicious life thy weal depends ;  
And, rest of whom, thy bliss would soon decay.  
Joy of this land, and brightness of her own,  
Glory of mothers, to her people dear,  
A follower sincere of the true faith ;  
Heaven and our earth combine alike to praise  
This woman, who adorns them both e'en now.  
Earth, by her offspring ; by her virtues Heaven !  
In the fourteen hundred, thirty-seventh year,  
First month's third day, her life drew to its close,  
And this queen's soul, beyond the starry sphere  
In heaven, received for aye, reigns blissfully.<sup>1</sup>

This original epitaph has hitherto escaped all modern historians ; but it is very probable, that as it implied the fact, that Katherine died a widow, and not a wife, it occasioned the demolition of the tomb, under the reign of her grandson.

Owen Tudor had been put in Newgate, when Katherine was sent to Bermondsey.<sup>2</sup> From thence he had escaped, and was at large at Daven-try, in the July following her death, when the king summoned him before his council, saying, "that he willed, that Owen Tudor, the which dwelled with his mother, queen Katherine, should come into his presence." Owen refused to come, unless he had a safe conduct, "free to

<sup>1</sup> William of Worcester, p. 459. This historian was a contemporary. When the peculiar circumstances of Katherine's second wedlock are considered, the epitaph becomes of no little importance, for, instead of acknowledging, it tacitly denies her second marriage.

<sup>2</sup> All our old chroniclers agree on this point ; it is evident that Owen broke out of Newgate twice.—See "Leland's Collectanea," vol. ii. p. 492.

come and free to go." The council gave the king's verbal promise that he should depart unharmed. Owen vowed he would not venture himself within their reach, without a written promise. This was granted, when he hastened to London, and threw himself into the sanctuary at Westminster, where he remained many days, "eschewing," as a document of the privy council says, "to leave it, although many persons, out of friendship and fellowship, stirred him to come out thereof, and disport himself, in the tavern at Westminster Gate." Here, when on duty at Westminster Palace, Owen had evidently been accustomed to resort, and, as a retired soldier, tell over, with boon companions, all his tales of Agincourt. He was right to resist the temptation of "disporting himself," for the council certainly meant to entrap him there.

At last, he heard that the young king was "heavily informed of him," or was listening to serious charges against him. Upon which Owen suddenly appeared before the privy council, then sitting in the chapel chamber at Kennington Palace, and defended himself with such manliness and spirit, that the king set him at liberty.

Owen immediately retired into Wales; but the duke of Gloucester, with a base prevarication perfectly inconsistent with the high character bestowed on him in history, sent after him,<sup>1</sup> and, in despite of the double safe conduct, had him consigned to the tender mercies of the earl of Suffolk, in the dungeons of the royal castle of Wallingford, under pretence of having broken prison.<sup>2</sup>

The lord-constable of England, Beaumont, was paid twenty marks, for the expenses he had incurred in catching and keeping Owen, his priest, and servant. The place where the privy council met to arrange this business is rather remarkable: it was transacted in the *secret chamber* belonging to cardinal Beaufort as bishop of Winchester, in the priory of St. Mary's Overy. There were present, in this secret conclave, "the lord-cardinal, the lord-chancellor, the earl of Suffolk, the treasurer, lord Hungerford, and John Stourton, knight."

It was found convenient to remand Owen back from Wallingford Castle to Newgate, where, it may be remembered, his priest and servant were committed. No sooner were these three persons in Newgate once more, than its walls were found inefficient to detain them; they all made a second escape, after "wounding foully their gaoler," as an old MS. in the Harleian Collection declares. Owen laid his plans so successfully, this second time of breaking out of Newgate, that he was not retaken, but fled with his faithful adherents to the fastnesses of North Wales, where he waited for better times.

It is, perhaps, not too much to infer, that the priest thus connected with Owen, was the person who secretly performed the marriage-cere-

<sup>1</sup> These curious links in the history of the unfortunate Katherine's partner, are filled up from sir Harris Nicolas' Minutes of the Privy Council, vol. v. p. 46—49.

<sup>2</sup> Fordera, vol. x. p. 685. The order for his imprisonment there, ends thus—  
"And, moreover, we will that you send us the fourscore and nine pounds that you found on the said priest, which you have now in hand, the which you are to deliver up for our use to the treasurer and chamberlain of our exchequer."

mony between him and Katherine, and that the servant was witness to the wedlock. The London Chronicle vindicates the honour of the queen, in words not very complimentary to her spouse. "This year, one Owen, a man *ne*<sup>1</sup> of birth, *ne* of livelihood, brake out of Newgate at searching time, the which Owen had privily wedded queen Katherine, and had three or four children by her, unknown to the common people till she was dead and buried."<sup>2</sup>

Katherine's eldest boys must have been very young at the time of her death, since they remained inmates of a nunnery, under the care of the abbess of Barking, till the year 1440. They were wholly neglected by the court; for, till the abbess supplicated most urgently, no money had been paid for the sustenance of these neglected little ones, after the death of the mother.<sup>3</sup>

Soon after the abbess had drawn the attention of Henry VI. to the existence of the children of his unfortunate mother, he placed them under the care of discreet priests, to be brought up chastely and virtuously.<sup>4</sup> The tutelage of the king himself had, at this time, ceased by the laws of England. If Katherine had survived till this period, she would have been differently treated; for more than one old historian asserts, that Henry VI. never forgave his uncle Gloucester the harsh usage his mother had experienced. As soon as the young king attained his majority, he allowed Owen Tudor an annuity of 40*l.* per annum, "which, for certain causes, him moving, he gave him out of his privy purse by especial grace."<sup>5</sup>

The eldest son of Katherine and Owen was married, by the influence of Henry VI., to Margaret Beaufort, the heiress of the house of Somerset. At the palace of Reading, his royal half-brother bestowed on him the title of Richmond. This was done amidst the rejoicings for the birth of Edward, prince of Wales, and the festivities in celebration of the king's restoration to health and reason. Edmund took precedence of all other English peers. He died in his twentieth year, leaving an infant son, afterwards Henry VII.

The next brother, Jasper Tudor, was created earl of Pembroke, the same day that his brother received the title of Richmond.<sup>6</sup> The third son lived and died a monk at Westminster.

Owen Tudor himself was taken into some sort of favour, but never graced with any title, or owned by Henry VI. as his father-in-law; as may be plainly seen by a deed dated so late as 1460, just before the battle of Northampton, where the king declares, "that out of consideration of the good services of *that beloved squire*, our Owinus Tudyr, we for the future take him into our special grace, and make him park-keeper

<sup>1</sup> Neither.

<sup>2</sup> A chronicler in Leland's Collection uses nearly the same words; but Leland has appended a note, saying, "It was the pride of the king's uncles alone which sought to cast scorn on Owen's birth; likewise, "that Owen escaped by aid of the priest."

<sup>3</sup> *Fœdera*, vol. x. p. 828.

<sup>4</sup> Blackman's Chronicle, printed at the end of Otterbourne's Chronicle.

<sup>5</sup> See several payments of this annuity, 21st and 22d of Henry VI.'s reign.

<sup>6</sup> Catalogue of Honour.

of our parks in Denbigh, Wales.”<sup>1</sup> This was granted when the king was in a distressed state, and the old warrior, his father-in-law, had drawn his Agincourt sword in his cause.

After the defeat and death of Richard duke of York, at Wakefield, a Lancastrian army, commanded by Jasper earl of Pembroke, and his father, Owen Tudor, pursued the earl of March, who, turning fiercely at bay, defeated them near Mortimer's Cross. Jasper made a successful retreat; but his father, with true Welsh obstinacy, positively refused to quit the lost field. he was taken prisoner; and, as he was the first victim on whom Edward had the opportunity of wreaking his vengeance for the death of York and Rutland, he ordered Owen Tudor's head to be smitten off in Hereford market-place, with two or three Lloyds and Howels, his kinsmen and comrades.<sup>2</sup> Such was the end of the second husband of queen Katherine, who lost his life stoutly battling for the cause of Lancaster.<sup>3</sup>

When Henry VII. ascended the throne of England, he caused the Lady Chapel at Westminster Abbey, with the tomb of queen Katherine, to be demolished for the purpose of building a new and stately chapel. In place of the epitaph destroyed, (which must, in its assertion that queen Katherine died widow to Henry V., have proved very embarrassing to the Tudors), the following lines were hung up, which were evidently written after Henry VII.'s accession.”<sup>4</sup>

“Here lies queen Katherine closed in grave, the French king's daughter fair,  
And of thy kingdom, Charles the Sixth, the true undoubted heir.  
Twice joyful wife in marriage—matched to Henry the Fifth by name,  
Because through her he nobled was, and shined in double fame.  
The king of England by descent, and by queen Katherine's right,  
The realm of France he did enjoy—triumphant king of might.  
A happy queen to Englishmen she came right grateful here,  
And four days' space they honoured God, with lips and reverent fear.  
Henry the Sixth this queen brought forth, with painful labour plight,  
In whose empire France was then, and he an English wight;  
Under no lucky planet born unto himself or throne,  
But equal with his parents both in pure religion.  
Of Owen Tudor, after this, thy next son Edmund was,  
O Katherine, a renowned prince, that did in glory pass!  
Henry the Seventh, a Britain pearl, a gem of England's joy,  
A peerless prince was Edmund's son, a good and gracious roy;  
Therefore a happy wife this was, a happy mother pure,  
Thrice happy child, but grand-dame she more than thrice happy, sure!”

Although Henry VII. had demolished the tomb of his grandmother, it is certain that he had not caused her remains to be exhumed, since he mentions her in his will, as still interred in the chapel; and it is evident that he intended to restore her monument.

“Specially as the body of our grand-dame of right noble memory, queen Katherine, daughter of the king of France, is interred within our monastery of Westminster, and we propose shortly to translate thither

<sup>1</sup> *Fœdera*, vol. x. p. 435.

<sup>2</sup> *Stow's Annals*, and Pennant.

<sup>3</sup> “A report had previously existed,” says Biondi, “that Owen had been put to death by Humphrey, duke of Gloucester.”

<sup>4</sup> *Stow's London*.

the reliques of our uncle of blessed memory, Henry VI., and whether we die within the realm or not, our body is to be buried in the said monastery—that is to say, in the chapel where our said grand-dame lies buried.”

When Henry VII. was interred, the corpse of Katherine was exhumed; and as her ungracious descendant, Henry VIII., did not fulfil his father's intention of restoring her tomb, the bones of the unfortunate queen never found a final resting-place till the commencement of the present century. When exhumed, the queen's corpse was found to be in extraordinary preservation; it was, therefore, shown as a curiosity to persons visiting Westminster Abbey, for at least three centuries. Weever, in his *Funeral Monuments*, thus mentions its state in the time of Charles I.

“Here lieth Katherine, queen of England, wife to Henry V., in a chest or coffin, with a loose cover, to be seen and handled of any who much desire it, and who, by her own appointment, inflicted this penance on herself, in regard to her disobedience to her husband, for being delivered of her son, Henry VI., at Windsor, which place he forbade.”

In the reign of Charles II., the poor queen was made a common spectacle; for that quaint compound of absurdities, Pepys, journalises, with infinite satisfaction, that he had “this day kissed a queen,” and, that he might make this boast, he had kissed the mummy of Katherine the Fair, shown for the extra charge of two pence to the curious in such horrors. Late in the reign of George III., the same disgusting traffic was carried on; for Hutton reprobates it in his *Tour through the Sights of London*. This exordium probably drew the attention of the then dean of Westminster; for the wretched remains of Katherine the Fair have reposed since then, sheltered from public view, in some nook of the vaults in Westminster Abbey.

# MARGARET OF ANJOU,

## QUEEN OF HENRY VI.

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### CHAPTER I.

Parentage and descent of Margaret—Her birth—Baptism—Misfortunes of her father—Conjugal heroism of her mother—Margaret betrothed in infancy—Her residence at Turascon—Charms and early promise—Goes with her mother to Naples—Her Italian education—First proposal of Henry VI.—Margaret courted by count de Nevers—Poverty of her parents—Fame of her beauty and talents—Henry VI. obtains her portrait—Secret negotiations—Treaty of Tours—Henry appoints Suffolk his procurator—Margaret married to king Henry at Nanci—Bridal fêtes and tournaments—The daisy her badge—Sorrowful parting with her family—Poverty of Henry VI.—Attendants—Progress of Margaret through France—Dines with the duke of York—Margaret's scanty equipment—Bridal wardrobe purchased by the king—Margaret embarks for England—Lands at Porchester—Falls sick at Southampton—Married to king Henry at Tichfield Abbey—Splendid pageants at London—Her coronation—Foreign followers—Embassy of congratulation—Friendship with cardinal Beaufort—Murder of the duke of Gloucester—Queen Margaret's influence in the government—Endows Queen's College—Banishment and murder of Suffolk—Cade's rebellion—Terror of the queen—Persuades the king to retire—Revolt suppressed—Queen persecutes John Payn—She favours Somerset—Wars of the Roses—Talbot MS. presented to the queen—Death of her mother—King's aberration of mind—Birth of prince Edward—Queen's churching—She exercises regal power—Loses it—King's recovery—Battle of St. Albans.

THE history of Margaret of Anjou, from the cradle to the tomb, is a tissue of the most striking vicissitudes, and replete with events of more powerful interest than are to be found in the imaginary career of any heroine of romance; for the creations of fiction, however forcibly they may appeal to our imaginations, fade into insignificance before the simple majesty of truth.

When we consider the stormy grandeur of character of this last and most luckless of our Provençal queens, her beauty, her learning, her energetic talents, and the important position she occupied for more than a quarter of a century in the annals of this country, first as the unconstitutional, but certainly supreme, director of the power of the crown, and lastly as the leader and rallying point of the friends of Lancaster, it is remarkable that no complete and authentic memoir of this princess has ever been given to the world.

René of Anjou, the father of Margaret, was the second son of Louis II., king of Sicily and Jerusalem, duke of Calabria and Anjou, and count

of Provence, by Yolante of Arragon. In 1420 René was, in his thirteenth year, espoused to Isabella, the heiress of Lorraine, who was only ten years old at the period of her nuptials. This lady, who was the direct descendant of Charlemagne, in addition to her princely patrimony, brought the beauty, the high spirit, and the imperial blood of that illustrious line, into the family of Anjou. Her youngest daughter, Margaret, was in all respects a genuine scion of the Carlovigian race; she also inherited her father's love of learning, and his taste for poetry and the arts.

Some of the English historians, following Monstrelet, place the date of Margaret's birth in 1425; but this is a palpable error, for her mother, who was scarcely fifteen at that time, did not give birth to her eldest child, John of Calabria, till the following year.<sup>1</sup> Then came prince Louis, followed by Nicolas and Yolante, twin-children, who were born October 2, 1428. After the decease of René and his sons, Yolante took the title of queen of Sicily, as the next heir; and this circumstance, together with her marriage-settlements, sufficiently attests the fact that she was the elder sister of our Margaret,<sup>2</sup> since the dates of the birth of children having claims to a disputed succession are generally strictly authenticated by the records of their own country. Thus we see that Margaret of Anjou was four years younger than has been generally supposed. According to the best authorities,<sup>3</sup> Margaret was born March 23, 1429, at Point à Mousson, her mother's dower-palace, one of the grandest castles in Lorraine. She was baptized under the great crucifix in the cathedral of Toul, by the bishop of that diocese. Her sponsors were her uncle, Louis III. king of Naples, and Marguerite, duchess of Lorraine, her maternal grandmother.

Margaret was yet in the arms of her father's faithful nurse, Theophanie,<sup>4</sup> by whom she was reared, when the fierce contest for the succession to Lorraine commenced, between her father and her mother's uncle, Anthony of Vaudemonte, on the death of her grandfather, Charles, duke of Lorraine.<sup>5</sup>

She had scarcely completed her second year, when her royal sire was defeated and made prisoner by his adversary, at the battle of Bulgneville. We learn from the chronicles of Lorraine, that the infant princess Mar-

<sup>1</sup> Moreri. Wassaburg. Villeneuve. Chron. de Lorraine.

<sup>2</sup> Again, this fact is incontestably demonstrated by the deed in which Margaret yields the reversion of her father's inheritance to Louis XI., in case the heirs of her elder sister, Yolante, should fail.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Wassaburg, a contemporary chronicler. M. de St. Marthe. Moreri. Limiers. Prevost. Villeneuve.

<sup>4</sup> The kind-hearted René raised a beautiful monument to this humble friend, who died in the year 1458, just as queen Margaret's troubles commenced. The good king had the effigy of his nurse carved, holding in her arms two children, himself and queen Marie, the consort of Charles VII.; he added an epitaph of his own writing; the lines are very naïve and pleasing.—*Vie du Roi René*.

<sup>5</sup> This prince dying without male issue, the duchy of Lorraine was claimed by his brother, Anthony of Vaudemonte, on pretence that it was a fief too noble to fall to the spindle side. René of Anjou asserted the right of his consort to the succession, which had been renounced by her two elder sisters.—*Mézerai*.



garet was her mother's companion, during the agonising hours of suspense in which she remained at Nanci, awaiting tidings of the issue of that disastrous fight. The event was too soon announced, by the arrival of the fugitives from the lost battle. "Alas!" exclaimed the duchess, clasping her little Margaret to her bosom, "where is René my lord?—he is taken—he is slain!"<sup>1</sup>

"Madam," said they, "be not thus abandoned to grief; the duke is in good health, though disabled, and prisoner to the Burgundians." But the duchess was inconsolable. The council of Lorraine regarded her with the deepest sympathy, for she was left with four helpless children, two boys and two girls, the most beautiful ever seen.

While the duchess Marguerite (her mother) rallied the dispirited friends of René, for the defence of Nanci, Isabel, the tenderest and most courageous of conjugal heroines, sought an interview with her hostile kinsman, in the hope of obtaining the release of her captive lord, and a cessation from the horrors of civil strife. Moved by her pathetic eloquence, Antoine granted a truce of six months, dated August 1, 1431.

Her supplications in behalf of René were fruitless, for he had been already given up to the duke of Burgundy, by whom he was consigned to a long imprisonment at Dijon, at the top of a high tower, still in existence.<sup>2</sup> The only condition on which the sire of Margaret could obtain even a temporary release from his thralldom, was at the price of bestowing his eldest daughter, Yolante, then in her ninth year, on the heir of his rival, the young Ferry or Frederic of Vaudemont, with part of the disputed lands of Lorraine for her portion. The little Margaret was at the same time betrothed to Pierre of Luxemburg, count St. Pol, whose squire had cut René down at the battle of Bulgneville.<sup>3</sup>

René, being pledged to pay a heavy sum of money to the duke of Burgundy for his ransom, was obliged to give his two boys as his hostages, and to resign Yolante to her new mother-in-law; so that, of their four beautiful children, the infant Margaret was the only one who returned to Nanci with her parents. Such a meeting and such a parting as that of René with his family was never before witnessed, and the "*petite créature*," Margaret, as she is called by the chroniclers of Lorraine, is said to have testified the utmost sensibility on this occasion.<sup>4</sup>

The death of the virtuous Margaret of Bavaria, the grandmother of

<sup>1</sup> "René," says the Lorraine Chronicle, "had fought like a lion, and was not overcome till he was blinded by the blood from a wound on the left brow, the scar of which he carried to the grave."

<sup>2</sup> Here, to dissipate the sorrow of his captivity, René employed himself in painting. The chapel of the castle of Dijon is still enriched with beautiful miniatures and painted glass by the royal hand of the father of our Margaret of Anjou. It was this exertion of his talents that finally terminated his captivity, for Philip the Good was so much pleased with the sight of his own portrait, painted on glass by his interesting prisoner, that he sought an interview with him, clasped him in his arms, and, after expressing the greatest admiration for his talents, offered to mediate with Antoine de Vaudemonte for his liberation. This portrait, together with one of Jean-sans-Peur, the father of duke Philip, was placed in the window of the church of Chartreuse at Dijon, but was demolished in the Revolution.

<sup>3</sup> Chronicles of Lorraine. Mezerai.

<sup>4</sup> Villeneuve.

this princess, at the close of the year 1434, increased the affliction of her family. But a heavier trial awaited Margaret and her parents. King René, being unable to fulfil the conditions of his release, was compelled to deliver himself up to his captors. His imprisonment was shared by his eldest son, Jean of Calabria, but Louis was restored to the arms of his sorrowing mother and sister.

In 1436, on the death of René's eldest brother, Louis king of Naples, the succession of his realms devolved on the royal captive, and his faithful consort Isabel prepared to assert his rights. Among the illustrious females of the fifteenth century, the mother of Margaret of Anjou holds a distinguished place, alike for her commanding talents, her great personal endowments, her courage, and conjugal tenderness. It was from this illustrious parent that Margaret inherited those energies which the sternest shocks of adversity were unable to subdue. With such a mother as Isabella of Lorraine, who was the patroness of Agnes Sorel, and the contemporary of Joan of Arc, born and nurtured amidst scenes of civil warfare and domestic calamity, it is scarcely wonderful if the characteristics of Anjou's heroine partook of the temper of the times in which she was unhappily thrown.

While arranging her measures for asserting by force of arms the claims of her captive lord, to the disputed succession of Naples, the mother of Margaret, who had now assumed the title of queen of the Two Sicilies, took up her abode with Margaret and Louis, at the château of Tarascon, on the banks of the Rhone. "The singular beauty and graces of these illustrious children," says the chronicler of Provence, "caused them to be regarded almost in the light of angel visitants."

The Provençals, whose poetic feelings were passionately excited by the advent of the consort and lovely children of their captive prince, followed them in crowds, wherever they appeared, singing songs in their praise, strewing flowers at their feet, presenting them with votive wreaths, and nightly kindling bonfires before the palace, to preserve them from infection. Nostradamus adds a very marvellous story, of a number of witches and evil fairies, who intruded themselves among the loyal throngs who came to gaze on those very beautiful and excellent creatures, "the Infanta<sup>1</sup> Marguerite and her brother."

The fearful visitation of the plague compelled the queen of the Sicilies to hurry her precious little ones from Tarascon. They embarked with her at Marseilles, for Naples; where, however, the pestilence, from which they had fled at Provence, was raging. The royal strangers took up their abode at Capua, the ancient palace of the family of Anjou, in Naples.

Queen Isabel caused her captive husband to be proclaimed as king of the Two Sicilies, at which ceremony the young Margaret and her bro-

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<sup>1</sup> The old Provençal writers constantly call our Margaret of Anjou the *infanta*. There was a horrid sacrifice of human life, by burning these pretended witches when the plague reached Tarascon, the ignorant in all ages believing pestilence to be occasioned by magic.

ner were seated by their royal mother, in the triumphal chair of state, covered with velvet and embroidered with gold, in which this conjugal heroine was borne through the street of Naples.

René was chiefly indebted for his deliverance from bondage to the exertions of his faithful consort. In the treaty for his liberation, the following remarkable article was proposed by the duke of Burgundy, which affords an indication that the English alliance was contemplated as early as 1435-6:—"And to cement the peace between the two powers, Margaret of Anjou, second daughter to the king René, shall espouse the young king of England." This was nine years before the marriage took place, the bride being but six years old; it appears a mere suggestion on the side of Burgundy,<sup>1</sup> without any sanction of the English, and was opposed by Charles VII.

Margaret of Anjou remained at the Capua Palace, with her heroic mother, till the year 1438, when René, having obtained his freedom, made his entry into Naples, with a Provençal army, mounted on a stately white charger. After tenderly embracing Margaret and her mother, he transferred their abode to the elegant palace, finished with the utmost profusion of luxury, by his voluptuous predecessor, Joanna II. Here, in the soft air of Italy, our young Margaret of Anjou proceeded in her education, under the care of her mother, and her brother's learned tutor, Antoine de Salle, author of some of the earliest romances of French literature, which, it is said, he wrote for the amusement of Margaret's brother; "Because," says Antoine, in his dedication, "you were always very fond, my prince, of hearing me tell you little tales."

This literary education, in the sweet and voluptuous clime of Naples, was by no means a suitable preparation for Margaret's English destination: for there could be few ideas in common between her and a rude people who had retrograded from the civilisation they had attained under the Provençal alliances of England.

In the year 1443, Margaret returned to Lorraine with her royal mother, having first experienced the grief of losing her brother prince Louis, with whom she had been educated. Previous to that event, the contract of marriage with the count de St. Pol having been broken off, her hand was sought by the count de Nevers, nephew to the duke of Burgundy, and matters were so far advanced that a day was appointed for the articles to be signed; but when it was discovered that a clause had been inserted, disinheriting the children that might be born of her elder sister Yolante and Ferry of Vaudemonte, Charles VII., whose consort, Mary of Anjou, was aunt to both princesses, would not permit the alliance to take place on such conditions.

The proposals of the count St. Pol were renewed after the death of prince Louis, but Nostradamus thinks the idea of the more splendid alliance with the king of England prevented them from being accepted.

Meantime the territories of Anjou and Maine, king René's patrimony

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<sup>1</sup> Isabella, duchess of Burgundy, was a princess of the Lancastrian blood, being the daughter of the king of Portugal, by Philippa, daughter of John of Gaunt.

(inherited as the appanage of his ancestor, Charles of Anjou, younger brother of St. Louis), were occupied by the troops of England; so that he could scarcely be said to possess a single undisputed town or castle, and his family and himself were reduced to a state of penury, which their illustrious descent and lofty titles only rendered the more conspicuous. But, however painfully these adversities might be felt by his consort and children, René regarded the frowns of fortune with philosophical indifference,<sup>1</sup> and, retiring into Provence, occupied himself with writing verses and composing music, for which he possessed no ordinary talents.<sup>2</sup>

Scarcely had Margaret of Anjou entered her teens, when her precocious charms and talents created the most lively sensations at the court of her aunt, the queen of France. "There was no princess in Christendom," says Barante,<sup>3</sup> "more accomplished than my lady Marguerite of Anjou. She was already renowned in France for her beauty and wit, and all the misfortunes of her father had only given her an opportunity of displaying her lofty spirit and courage."

"The report of these charms," according to another learned, but somewhat imaginative, French author, "first reached Henry VI., the young bachelor king of England, through the medium of a gentleman of Anjou, named Champchevrier, a prisoner at large (belonging to sir John Falstolf), with whom king Henry was accustomed to converse occasionally; and he gave so eloquent a description of the rare endowments which nature had bestowed on the portionless daughter of the impoverished king of the Two Sicilies, that Henry despatched him to the court of Lorraine, to procure a portrait of the young princess." This statement is quite consistent with Henry's proceedings, in regard to the preliminaries for his alliance with a daughter of the count of Armagnac; for we find, by the curious correspondence between the two courts, that a painter named Hans was employed by the youthful monarch, to paint the portraits of the three daughters of that prince, for his satisfaction. Henry was very explicit in his directions that the likenesses should be perfect, requiring that the young ladies "should be painted in their kirtles simple, and their visages like as ye see, and their stature, and their beauty, the colour of their skin, and their counte-

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<sup>1</sup> So little resemblance was there in character between René and his energetic daughter Margaret, that it is related of him, that when the news of the loss of one of his kingdoms was brought to him while he was engaged in painting a partridge from nature, he paid no attention to the communication, nor would he see the messenger, till he had given the finishing strokes to his design.

<sup>2</sup> René's original compositions in music are at this very time the delight of his native country, and, indeed, of Europe. He was the inventor of the opera ballet; and the drama of *La Tentacion*, revived with so much splendour at Paris, in 1832, was originally composed by this prince. The wild story is his own, and the delightful melodies his composition, which have been merely tamed and regulated by modern art. This prince, adored for his beneficence by his people, who named him the Good, was scorned by the destructive nobles of his era, as *fainéant* and feeble-minded.

<sup>3</sup> The learned chronicler of the duke of Burgundy.

nances."<sup>1</sup> The commissioners "were to urge the artist to use great expedition, and to send the picture or *ymagine* over to the king as quickly as possible, that he might make his choice between the three."<sup>2</sup>

Champchevrier, more successful in his mission than the reverend plenipotentiaries who had endeavoured to negotiate the matrimonial treaty with the court of Armagnac, obtained a portrait of Margaret, painted by one of the first artists in France, who was employed, our author adds, by the earl of Suffolk. This is not unlikely, for Suffolk was the ostensible instrument in this marriage; but the real person with whom the project for a union between Henry VI. and Margaret of Anjou originated, appears to have been no other than cardinal Beaufort, the great-uncle of the king.<sup>3</sup> The education of Henry VI. having been superintended by the cardinal, he was fully aware of the want of energy and decision in his character, which rendered it desirable to provide him with a consort whose intellectual powers would be likely to supply his constitutional defects, and whose acquirements might render her a suitable companion for so learned and refined a prince.<sup>4</sup>

In Margaret of Anjou all these requisites were united with beauty, eloquence, and every feminine charm calculated to win unbounded influence over the plastic mind of the youthful sovereign. She was, moreover, at that tender and unreflective age, at which she might be rendered a powerful auxiliary in the cardinal's political views. Under these circumstances, there can be little doubt that Champchevrier had received his cue from the cardinal, when he described to Henry, in such glowing colours, the charms and mental graces of the very princess to whom he had determined to unite him, both for the reasons we have before stated, and as a means of concluding a peace with France.

In the meantime sir John Falstolf, who was not in the secret, being greatly enraged at the departure of his prisoner without having made any agreement for the payment of his ransom, employed the duke of Gloucester, with whom he enjoyed some credit, to write a letter to the king of France, explaining the circumstance, and entreating that he might be restored to him.<sup>5</sup> According to the laws of chivalry, no prince was justified in extending his protection to a captive who had forfeited his *parole* of honour; therefore king Charles issued orders for the arrest of Champchevrier, who was taken on his way from the court of Lorraine towards England. He was brought before the king of France at Vincennes, and fully cleared himself from all imputations on his honour, by producing a safe conduct to Lorraine, signed by king Henry, and explaining the nature of the mission on which he had been employed by his captor's sovereign.

<sup>1</sup> Beckington's Journal, edited by sir Harris Nicolas, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> There is much correspondence in Beckington's Journal, as to these portraits, which were painted in oil on canvass. The count of Armagnac, who, it seems, was only amusing the English with negotiations he never intended to fulfil, states, "that one of the portraits is done, and the others shall be completed with all speed;" but they certainly never reached England.

<sup>3</sup> Barante's Chronicles of the dukes of Burgundy. Guthrie's fol. Hist. of England.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> This letter is still in existence in the royal archives of France.—*Prevost*.

Charles VII. was highly amused at the information thus obtained of his nephew's love-affairs; and being struck with the great advantages that might result to himself and his harassed kingdom, if an alliance were actually to be formed between Henry and his fair kinswoman, he released Champchevrier, and enjoined him to return to the court of England without delay, and make use of every representation in his power to incline king Henry to choose the lady Margaret for his queen.

The re-appearance of Champchevrier at Windsor, and his frequent conferences with the king, caused, it is added, suspicions as to the nature of the business on which he had been employed, in the mind of the duke of Gloucester, who kept up a jealous espionage on the actions of his royal nephew. These suspicions were confirmed when king Henry undertook himself to satisfy sir John Falstolf for the ransom of his prisoner, and despatched him a second time on a secret mission to the court of Lorraine.

Henry VI. was then in his four-and-twentieth year, beautiful in person, of a highly cultivated and refined mind, holy and pure in thought and deed, resisting with virtuous indignation every attempt that had been made by the unprincipled females of his court to entangle him in the snares of illicit passion; 'yet pining for the sweet ties of conjugal love and sympathy. The loneliness of his condition, and "his earnest desire to live under the holy sacrament of marriage," are pathetically set forth by the bachelor monarch, in his curious instructions to the commissioners empowered by him, two years before, to conduct the negotiations between him and the court of Armagnac.<sup>2</sup>

The choice of a consort for the young king, was the deciding contest for political mastery, between those fierce rival kinsmen, the duke of Gloucester and cardinal Beaufort. Gloucester's favourite project, of uniting his royal nephew with a princess of the house of Armagnac, was rendered abortive, by Henry's determination not to commit himself in any way, till he had seen the portraits of the ladies;<sup>3</sup> and while the count of Armagnac, who was playing a double game with the court of France, delayed the artist's progress, for diplomatic reasons, the lively transcript of the charms of his lovely kinswoman, Margaret of Anjou, made an indelible impression on the heart of the youthful monarch, and he resolved to obtain her hand at any sacrifice. The sacrifice was, after all, much less than has been represented; and Henry VI., in his ardent desire to give peace to his exhausted realm, proved himself a more enlightened ruler than his renowned sire, who had deluged the continent with blood, and rendered the crown bankrupt, in the vain attempt to unite England and France. The national pride of the English prompted them to desire a continuance of the contest, but it was a contest no less ruinous now to England than to France; and cardinal Beaufort, with the other members of Henry's cabinet, being destitute of the means of maintaining the war, were only too happy to enter into amicable negotiations

<sup>1</sup> When the ladies presented themselves before him immodestly attired, the young king turned away, with this primitive rebuke—"Fie, fie, forsooth, ye be much to blame."

<sup>2</sup> Beckington's Journal. edited by sir Harris Nicolas. p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

with France, on the grounds of a matrimonial alliance between king Henry and Margaret of Anjou, who, through her grandmother, Margaret of Bavaria, was nearly related both to Charles VII. and to Henry.

In January, 1444, the commissioners of England, France, and Burgundy, were appointed to meet at Tours, to negotiate a truce with France, preparatory to a peace, the basis and cement of which were to be the marriage of the young king of England with the beautiful niece of the queen of France. Many historians are of opinion that the matrimonial treaty, with all its startling articles, had been privately settled between the courts of England, France, and Lorraine, before the publication of the commission for negotiating the truce.<sup>1</sup>

Suffolk, who was appointed the ambassador extraordinary on this occasion, was so much alarmed at the responsibility he was likely to incur, that he actually presented a petition to the king, praying to be excused from the office that had been put upon him;<sup>2</sup> nor could he be prevailed upon to undertake it, till he was secured from personal peril, by an order from the king under the great seal, enjoining him to undertake, without fear or scruple, the commission which had been given him. Thus assured, Suffolk was, in an evil hour for himself and all parties concerned, persuaded to stand in the gap, by becoming the procurator of the most unpopular peace, and fatal marriage, that were ever negotiated by a prime minister of England. As a preliminary, a truce for two years was signed, May 28th, 1444.

Neither money nor lands were demanded for the dowry of the bride, whose charms and high endowments were allowed by the gallant ambassadors of England "to outweigh all the riches in the world."<sup>3</sup>

When the proposal was made in form, to the father of the young Margaret, he replied, in the spirit of a knight-errant, "That it would be inconsistent with his honour to bestow his daughter in marriage on the usurper of his hereditary dominions, Anjou and Maine;"<sup>4</sup> and he demanded the restoration of these provinces, as an indispensable condition in the marriage-articles. This demand was backed by the king of France, and, after a little hesitation, ceded by king Henry and his council.

The handsome and accomplished count de Nevers, who was a prince of the house of Burgundy, a soldier and a poet, was at the same time a candidate for the hand of the royal Provençal beauty, to whom he was passionately attached;<sup>5</sup> and it is probable that the idea of this formidable rival, who was on the spot withal, to push his suit in person, might have had some effect in influencing king Henry to a decision, more lover-like than politic.

As soon as the conditions of the marriage were settled, Suffolk returned to bring the subject before parliament, where he had to encounter a stormy opposition from the duke of Gloucester and his party, who were equally hostile to a peace with France, and a marriage with a

<sup>1</sup> Guthrie. Barante. Speed.

<sup>2</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*. It is remarkable that Suffolk, Molyns, and Wenlock, the commissioners in this treaty, all came to violent ends.

<sup>3</sup> Speed. Rapin. Guthrie. Barante.

<sup>4</sup> Rapin.

<sup>5</sup> Villeneuve.

daughter of the house of Anjou. Suffolk, however, only acted as the agent of cardinal Beaufort, who possessed an ascendancy, not only in the council, but with the parliament; and, above all, the inclinations of the royal bachelor being entirely on his side, his triumph over Gloucester was complete. Suffolk was dignified with the title of marquess, and invested with full powers to espouse the lady Margaret of Anjou, as the proxy of his sovereign.<sup>1</sup> There is, in Rymer's *Fœdera*, a letter from the king, addressed to Suffolk, as the grand seneschal of his household, dated Oct. 28th, 1444, in which he says:—

"As you have lately, by the divine favour and grace, in our name and for us, engaged verbally the excellent, magnificent, and very bright Margaretta, the serene daughter of the king of Sicily, and sworn that we shall contract matrimony with her, we consent, and will that she be conducted to us over seas, from her country and friends, at our expense."

Suffolk, accompanied by his lady, and a splendid train of the nobility had sailed from England on this fatal mission some time before, and proceeded to Nanci. The king, queen, and the dauphiness of France, the dukes of Bretagne and Alençon, and, in short, all the most distinguished personages of the courts of France and Lorraine, were there assembled, to do honour to the espousals of the youthful Margaret.<sup>2</sup>

Historians vary as to the time and place of this ceremonial; but, according to the best authorities, it was solemnised, in November, 1444, by Louis d'Harancourt, bishop of Toul, at Nanci, in St. Martin's Church, where, in the presence of her illustrious parents, the royal family of France, and a concourse of nobles and ladies, the marquess of Suffolk espoused the lady Margaret, in the name and as the proxy of his sovereign, Henry VI. of England.<sup>3</sup>

Drayton, in his poetical chronicle, after quaintly enumerating the rank and number of the distinguished guests at queen Margaret's espousals, thus elegantly alludes to the charms of the royal bride:—

"Whilst that only she,  
Like to the rosy morning towards its rise,  
Cheers all the church as it doth cheer the skies."

King René indulged his passion for pageantry and courtly games, at these nuptials, to his heart's content. A tournament was proclaimed in honour of the young queen of England, at which throngs of princely knights and gallant warriors wore garlands of daisies in the lists, out of compliment to the royal bride of fifteen, who had chosen this flower for her emblem.<sup>4</sup>

Among those who particularly distinguished themselves on this occasion, were Charles of Anjou, the gallant uncle of the bride, and Pierre

<sup>1</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*. Guthrie. Parliamentary Rolls.

<sup>2</sup> Stow. Monstrelet. Barante. Villeneuve.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> The following passage is in the original words of Richard Wassaburg, a contemporary of Margaret, who was personally known to him, and his testimony as to her age is of great importance; Madame Margaret, d'Anjou, *fille du roi René,illante en age quinze ans. Car nous trouvons qu'elle fut née en l'an mil quatre cent vingt neuf, fiancée au Henri roi d'Angleterre.*



de Brezé, lord of Varenne, and seneschal of Normandy, one of the commissioners, who negotiated the marriage-treaty of the beautiful Margaret, in whose service, during the melancholy period of the wars of the Roses, he afterwards performed such romantic exploits.<sup>1</sup> Charles VII. appeared in the lists more than once in honour of his fair kinswoman; he bore on his shield the serpent of the fairy Melusina. He tilted with the father of the royal bride, by whom, however, he was vanquished. The most distinguished renown was won by Margaret's forsaken spouse, the count St. Pol, who received the prize from the hands of her aunt, the queen of France, and her mother, the queen of Sicily.<sup>2</sup>

It is to be observed that Suffolk took no part in the jousts or games. Such exercises were, in fact, little suited to his grave years, which greatly outnumbered those of the father of the youthful bride, notwithstanding all that poets and romancing historians have feigned, on the subject of the imaginary passion of Margaret, for the hoary proxy of her lord.

The bridal festivities lasted eight days, and the spot where the tournament was held, is still called, in memory of that circumstance, the *Place de Carrière*. All the noble ladies in Lorraine came from their Gothic castles to be present at these *fêtes*, where all the beauty and chivalry of France, and England, and Burgundy, were assembled.<sup>3</sup> The long-delayed marriage of Margaret's elder sister with her cousin, Ferry of Vaudemonte, was completed at the same time, under the following romantic circumstances: "Ferry, who was passionately enamoured of his beautiful *fiancée*, Yolante, to whom he had been betrothed upwards of nine years, rendered desperate by the delays of her father (who never intended to allow her to fulfil her forced engagement, with the son of his adversary), formed and executed a plan, with a band of adventurous young chevaliers, for carrying her off, at the nuptial tournament of her younger sister Margaret. King René was very angry at first, but was induced, by the mediation of the king and queen of France, and the rest of the royal company, to forgive the gallant trespass of the long-de-frauded bridegroom; and a general reconciliation took place, in which all past rancours were forgotten, and the pageants and games were renewed with fresh spirit."<sup>4</sup>

At the conclusion of the eight days' fête, Margaret was solemnly delivered to the marquess and marchioness of Suffolk, and took a mournful farewell of her weeping kindred and friends. "Never," say the chroni-

<sup>1</sup> Barante. Monstrelet.

<sup>2</sup> Wassaburg. Barante.

<sup>3</sup> Agnes Sorel, the all-powerful mistress of Charles VII., who had twelve years previously been maid of honour to queen Margaret's mother, made a conspicuous appearance at this tournament. She was called "the Lady of Beauty," and on this occasion assumed the dress of an Amazon, wearing a suit of fanciful armour blazing with jewels, in which she came on the ground, mounted on a superb charger, splendidly caparisoned. Such were the morals at the court of the last of the Provençal sovereigns, that the presence of "*La Belle Agnes*," far from being regarded as an insult to the virgin bride, in whose honour the tournament was held, or to her aunt the queen of France and the dauphiness, was considered to add the greatest *éclat* to the *fêtes*.—Barante.

<sup>4</sup> Villeneuve. Wassaburg.

clers of her native land, "was a young princess more deeply loved in the bosom of her own family." Charles VII. of France, who was tenderly attached to the accomplished niece of his queen, accompanied her two leagues from Nanci, clasped her at parting many times in his arms, and said, with his eyes full of tears,—

"I seem to have done nothing for you, my niece, in placing you on one of the greatest thrones in Europe, for it is scarcely worthy of possessing you." Sobs stifled his voice; the young queen could only reply with a torrent of tears; they parted, and saw each other no more. Charles returned to Nanci, with his eyes swollen with weeping.<sup>1</sup> A harder parting took place with her father, who went with her as far as Bar; there he commended her to God, but neither the father nor the daughter could speak to each other, but turned away with full hearts, without uttering a single word.<sup>2</sup>

These regrets,—in which persons who were, by the etiquettes and restraints of royalty, taught to conceal every emotion of the heart, so passionately indulged on this occasion,—are sufficient evidence of the amiable and endearing qualities of the youthful Margaret, or her loss would not have been so deeply lamented, when she was departing from a precarious and care-clouded home, to fulfil a destiny, whose perspective was, at that time, brilliant.

Margaret's eldest brother, John duke of Calabria, and the duke of Alençon, attended her on her route, but she travelled with her own train, as queen of England, under the protection of the marquess of Suffolk and his wife.<sup>3</sup> This lady, who was the grand-daughter and heiress of Geoffrey Chaucer, the father of English poetry, was also first-cousin to cardinal Beaufort, and was, doubtless on that account, selected by him as the *chaperon*, or state governess, of the virgin bride of Henry VI. It was, probably, through the influence of the marchioness of Suffolk, that the young queen formed that inviolable bond of friendship, with all the princes of the house of Beaufort, which afterwards involved her in such great unpopularity.

The countess of Shrewsbury, and the lady Emma de Scales, were also in the personal retinue of the young queen. There were, besides, five barons and baronesses in attendance on her, who were paid for their services 4s. 6d. per day; seventeen knights, including her two carvers, at 2s. 6d. per day. Breknoke, the clerk of her comptroller's wages, and those of his coadjutor, John Everdon, were equal to those of the knights.

<sup>1</sup> Barante. Monstrelet. Wassaburg.

<sup>2</sup> Villeneuve.

<sup>3</sup> Through the especial kindness and courtesy of the rev. George C. Tomlinson, the learned vicar of Staughton, Huntingdonshire, in favouring me with various important extracts, from the curious MS. accounts of the clerk of the comptroller of queen Margaret's household, called the "Breknoke Computus," we are enabled to give many interesting facts connected with the bridal of this queen, not contained in the first edition of the Lives of the Queens of England, and perfectly new to the public. The generosity of Mr. Tomlinson is the more deserving of gratitude, as the "Breknoke Computus" is preparing for the press, under his able editorship, and stands the first in the list of historical treasures which the Dugdale Society are about to publish.

Sixty-five squires received each 1s. 6d. per day; 174 valets at 6d. per day; nineteen palfreymen and sumptermen 4d. per day; and, in addition to those who received wages, many persons were attached to the *suite* who served gratuitously.<sup>1</sup>

In anticipation of Margaret's arrival, king Henry wrote a quaint and earnest letter to the Goldsmith's Company, "entreating them to do their *devoir* at the coming of his entirely well-beloved wife, the queen, whom he expected, through God's grace, to have with him in right brief time." This letter is dated Nov. 30th, 1444, but the advent of the royal bride was delayed nearly four months.

We are indebted to the Breknoke Computus for the following diary of the last three weeks of Margaret's journey to England.

"Pontoise, March 18th. This day the lady Margaret, the queen, came with her family to supper at the expense of our lord the king. Cost, 12l. 11s. 1d.

"Friday, 19th. The queen went to sup with the duke of York, at Mantes. Cost, 5l. 5s. 1d.

"Saturday, 20th. To dine with the duke of York, at the same place. Cost, 4l. 7s. 5½d."

These were important days in the journal, not only of the bridal progress, but in the life of Margaret of Anjou, for it was her first introduction to the prince, whose rival claims to her husband's throne engendered those deadly animosities, which proved in the end fatal to them both. The entertainment received by the royal bride must have been agreeable to her, as she repeated her visit. We gather from this entry, that Margaret's acquaintance with the duke of York preceded her introduction to the king her husband. On the 20th, she proceeded from Mantes to Vernon, where she slept. On the 23d she arrived at Rouen. There is an item of 4s. 9d. for fourteen pairs of shoes, bestowed by Margaret on various poor women, on her journey from Mantes. At Rouen she remained a week, and there two curious entries occur. The first certifies the fact that the young queen made purchase of some articles of second-hand plate, of a goldsmith of that town;<sup>2</sup> the second, that her want of money was so pressing, that she was compelled to pawn divers vessels of mock silver to the duchess of Somerset,<sup>3</sup> to raise funds for some of the expenses of her journey.

Margaret left Rouen, and slept at Bokamshard monastery, March 31st.

<sup>1</sup> Breknoke Computus.

<sup>2</sup> To John Tabaude, goldsmith, at Rouen, for taking out and removing the arms of Henry de Luxemburgh, lately chancellor of France, from sundry silver vessels bought from him by the lady the queen, together with . . . of the aforesaid silver vessels, and the polishing of the same. In the reward given to him on the 12th day of March, 1445, by the hands of William Elmesley, valet of the jewels to the lord the king, 2l. 3s. 4d.—*Breknoke Computus*.

<sup>3</sup> In money paid to Thomas Dawson, esq., in the service of the lady duchess of Somerset, coming from Rouen to London, with divers vessels of *mock silver*, belonging to the lady the queen, mortgaged to the said duchess for a certain sum of money advanced by her, for the wages of divers mariners, &c. In reward to him for his expenses and safe carriage of the said vessels, &c., 2l. 13s. 4d. [This entry is cancelled in the original MS.]—*Ibid*.

The next day she proceeded to Pountamdeur; she reached Hounfleet, April 3d. There she remained several days; April 8th, a small English vessel, called the "Trinity, of Colchester," transported her and her *suite* to the port of Kiddecaws, where the "Cokke John," of Cherburg, the ship appointed for her voyage, had been long waiting her arrival. The Breknoke Computus proves a payment of 5*l.* 4*s.* 10*d.* to the pilot attending in the "Cokke John," also to the purser of the same, 13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*, price of a large cable bought by him, for the security of the said ship whilst riding at anchor near Kiddecaws, and of 9*l.* 7*s.* for making conveniences in the vessel—viz., divers chambers and cabins, and a bridge for the ingress and egress of the lady-queen. These ships had been in commission ever since the 5th of September, 1444.<sup>1</sup>

Margaret's long sojourn on the continent was caused by the necessity of the king summoning a new parliament, for the purpose of obtaining the needful supplies for his marriage. It met at Westminster, February 25th, 1445. The king remained seated in his chair of state, while his chancellor Stafford, archbishop of Canterbury, explained the cause for which parliament was summoned, in a species of political sermon, commencing with this text, "Justice and peace have kissed each other." He then proceeded to notify the suspension of hostilities in France, and the marriage between the king and Margaret, daughter of the king of Sicily; "by which two happy events, he nothing doubted but, through God's grace, justice and peace should be firmly established throughout the realm."<sup>2</sup> The parliament granted a half-fifteenth on all moveable goods to the king, to defray the expenses of the late commission, for the truce with France and his marriage, and was then prorogued till the 29th of April, to allow the necessary interval for the arrival of the new queen, and the solemnization of the royal nuptials.

There is a curious document in the *Fœdera*, in which the needy sovereign makes an assignment of part of his half-fifteenth, granted, but not yet raised, to a certain knight, for the purchase of his jewel of St. George, and also as security for the sum of two thousand marks. "which," says Henry, "our beloved knight has now lent us in *prest* (ready) money, at the contemplation of the coming of our most best beloved wife the queen, now into our presence."

The records in the *Fœdera*, from the Pell Roll, 23d of Henry VI., bear melancholy testimony to the utter destitution of the royal privy purse at this period, and the pitiable expedients to which the unfortunate sovereign was reduced, in order to meet his bridal expenses. Among other items, there is an order directing "that the remaining third part of one of the crown jewels, called the 'rich collar' (which had already been broken and pledged, in two separate pieces, to his uncle cardinal Beaufort, for two thousand marks, in the time, as Henry pathetically observes, 'of our great necessity') should be delivered to the said most worshipful father in God, and a patent made out securing to him the first two parts, and for the delivery of the third." This jewel was never redeemed by the impoverished king, who was, in fact, compelled

<sup>1</sup> They were paid off the 11th of April, 1445.

<sup>2</sup> Parliamentary History.

to pawn all his private jewels and household plate, to provide the equipages and other indispensable articles required, for his marriage, and the coronation of the young queen.

The wars so ruthlessly carried on with France for the third of a century, had made the English crown nearly bankrupt. Henry could with difficulty keep his royal state, though he was anxious that a great display should be made to welcome his bride. Poverty was the plague which pursued Margaret all her life, at her father's court, and was ready to receive her in Henry's palace.

The funds necessary for her reception having been at length obtained, the royal bride embarked with her train, as previously mentioned, April 8th, and on the following day landed at Porchester. She was so much indisposed with the voyage, that Suffolk carried her from the boat to the shore in his arms. A terrible storm greeted Margaret of Anjou, almost as soon as she set foot on shore. But the people, notwithstanding the thunder and lightning, ran in crowds to look at her, and the men of Porchester courteously strewed their streets with rushes, for her to pass over. She was conducted to a convent at Portsmouth, called Godde's House, where, having reposed a little, she entered the church, and there made her oblation of 6s. 8d. The following day, Saturday, 10th, she was conveyed by water to Southampton with great state. The sum of 17. 3s. 4d. was paid to seven foreign trumpeters, "for playing on the decks of two Genoese galleys, as they passed our lady-queen between Portsmouth and Southampton." Margaret was conveyed by rowing. At Southampton, as well as at Portsmouth, the young queen lodged in a religious hospital, called Godde's House.<sup>1</sup> Here she was seized with a dangerous cutaneous malady, which from king Henry's quaint and homely description of its symptoms, in his letter to his chancellor, appears to have been no other than the small-pox.<sup>2</sup> This sickness "of his most dear and best beloved wife the queen" is stated by Henry to be the cause why he could not keep the feast of St. George, at Windsor Castle.<sup>3</sup> He had been waiting some days at Southwick, to welcome his long-expected bride, and remained there in anxious suspense, during the period of her alarming illness, till she was sufficiently recovered to join him there.

"In the Breknoke Computus we have the following entry of money paid to master Francis, the physician, who had attended the queen on her journey and voyage to England, for divers spices, confections, and powders, bought and provided by him, for making medicines for the safe keeping of the person of the said lady the queen, as well by land as by sea, by precept of the marquess of Suffolk, at Southampton, on the 10th day of April, in the 23d year of the reign of the king,

<sup>1</sup> The house of this name at Portsmouth, was founded by Peter de Rupibus, bishop of Winchester; whilst God's House at Southampton was founded by two merchants. Both were termed "hospitals," and were free to all sick travellers, from the humblest voyager to the monarch or his bride.

<sup>2</sup> Preface to sir Harris Nicolas' *Acts of the Privy Council*, vol. i. p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 16.

3*l.* 9*s.* 2*d.*” A very reasonable doctor’s bill, our readers will allow, considering the importance of the patient.

Our records bear witness of the fact that Margaret’s bridal wardrobe was so scantily furnished, that king Henry was under the necessity of supplying her with array suitable to a queen of England, before she could appear publicly in that character. As soon as she arrived at Southampton, indeed, an express was forwarded to London, for an English dress-maker to wait on her, as we find from the following payment :—“ To John Pole, valet, sent from Southampton to London, by command of the marquess of Suffolk, with three horses, for Margaret Chamberlayne, tyre-maker, to bring her into the presence of the lady queen, for divers affairs touching the said lady queen. For the expenses going and coming, by gift of the queen, 1*l.*”<sup>1</sup>

The nuptials of Margaret of Anjou and Henry VI. were solemnised on the 22d of April, 1445, in Tichfield Abbey.<sup>2</sup> The bridal ring had been made in the preceding January, from a ring of gold, garnished with a fair ruby, which had formerly been presented to the king by his uncle, cardinal Beaufort, “ with the which,” he says, “ we were sacré-d on the day of our coronation at Paris.” A jewel of inauspicious omen.<sup>3</sup>

The beautiful young queen received from one of her new subjects, on the occasion of her bridal, a present, not of a lap-dog, but the more characteristic offering of a lion, and the following entry by Breknoke specifies the cost incurred by the addition of this royal pet, to the charges of the household :—“ To John Fouke and Peryn Galyman, for the food and keeping of a lion, presented to the lady the queen, at Tichfield, together with the carriage of the same lion from thence to the Tower of London, for the expenses thereof, and of the said lion, 2*l.* 5*s.* 3*d.*”

Margaret had completed her fifteenth year exactly one month before her marriage with king Henry ; and, notwithstanding the dissatisfaction of the nation at her want of dower, their contempt for the indigence of her father, and the prejudice created by her close connexion with the royal family of France, her youth, her beauty, and noble presence, procured her an enthusiastic welcome wherever she appeared. The people pressed in crowds to gaze upon her, and all the nobility and chivalry of England wore her emblem-flower, the daisy,<sup>4</sup> in their caps and bonnets of estate, when they came with their retainers and servants, clad in sumptuous liveries, in all the pomp and pride of feudality, to meet and welcome the royal bride on her London-ward progress.

Drayton alludes to this picturesque compliment, in the following couplet :—

<sup>1</sup> Breknoke Computus.

<sup>2</sup> Stow. Hail.

<sup>3</sup> There is in the same document a curious inventory of rings and ouches with other jewels, which the king bestowed as New-year’s gifts on his uncles and nobles, who were in far better condition to make presents to their impoverished sovereign than he to them, in honour of his nuptials.—*Rymer’s Fœdera*, vol. xi. p. 75.

<sup>4</sup> Drayton’s Chronicle. Stow, likewise, says — “ her badge was the daisy flower.”

"Of either sex who doth not now delight  
To wear the daisy for queen Marguerite?"

King Henry, in compliment to his lovely and beloved consort, caused her emblem-flower to be enamelled and engraved on his plate.<sup>1</sup>

By no one was Margaret treated with more peculiar marks of respect, on her bridal progress, than by the duke of Gloucester, who, as if to atone for his opposition to her marriage with his royal nephew, came to meet her at Blackheath, with five hundred men wearing his livery and badge, to do her honour,<sup>2</sup> and so conducted her to his palace at Greenwich, where she was refreshed. Great preparations had been made in London and its vicinity, for the reception of the young queen. Triumphant arches were erected across the road through which she was to pass, and "many costly pageants were made ready," says Fabyan, "of divers old histories, to her great comfort, and that of such as came with her."

"On the 28th of May, queen Margaret was met at Blackheath by an equestrian procession, consisting of the mayor, aldermen, and sheriffs of the city of London, in scarlet, and the crafts of the same, all riding on horseback, in blue gowns, with embroidered sleeves, and red hoods, who conveyed her with her train through Southwark, and so on to the city of London, which was then beautified with pageants of divers histories and other shows of welcome, marvellous costly and sumptuous, of which I can only name a few. At the bridge-foot towards Southwark was a pageant of Peace and Plenty; and at every street-corner, in allusion to the text of the parliamentary sermon, two puppets, in a moving pageant, called Justice and Peace, were made to kiss each other. Noah's ship (the ark) upon the bridge, with verses in English. At Leadenhall, Madam Grace, the chancellor of God. At the inn in Cornhill, St Margaret. At the great conduit in Cheapside, the five wise and five foolish virgins. At the cross in the Cheap, the Heavenly Jerusalem, with verses. At Paul's Gate, the General Resurrection and Judgment, with verses accordingly, all made by John Lydgate."<sup>3</sup>

Margaret was crowned at Westminster, May 30th, with a degree of royal splendour little suited to the exhausted treasury of her enamoured consort; but doubtless to the no small satisfaction of the faithful steward, squire, and minstrels of her father, who came to witness the coronation of their princess, and report the same in their own land.

A few notices of the grants bestowed on those hungry Anjevans and Italians are to be found in the Issue Rolls.<sup>4</sup> In addition to all the splen-

<sup>1</sup> Among the recently published records of the royal jewels, we find these entries:—"Item, one saltcellar of gold, and cover, enamelled with the arms of the king and the flowers called Marguerites, the boss garnished with one balass, given by the lord king to queen Margaret. Likewise a pitcher or jug of gold, the foot garnished with a sapphire, given by the king to queen Margaret.

<sup>2</sup> Stow's Annals.

<sup>3</sup> Stow.

<sup>4</sup> "To John d'Escose, an esquire of the king of Sicily, who, as the subject of the queen's father, left his own occupations abroad, and came in the queen's retinue, to witness the ceremony of her coronation, in money paid to him, 66*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* To five minstrels of the king of Sicily, who lately came to England to

did pageantry in honour of Margaret's bridal and coronation, a tournament was held at Westminster, which lasted three days, and was brilliantly attended. The lists occupied the whole space from Palace-yard to the Sanctuary.<sup>1</sup>

A few weeks after the coronation of Margaret of Anjou, an embassy of congratulation arrived from her uncle the king of France, and another from her father, to Henry VI.<sup>2</sup> "July 16th, the king gave them audience at Westminster Palace, seated in a very high chair of state, called a sallete, covered with tapestry of blue diaper, the livery of Henry V. He was dressed in a long robe of vermillion cloth-of-gold, which swept the ground; and was attended by his uncle, the duke of Gloucester, Suffolk, and other peers. When the ambassadors delivered their credentials, the king raised his hat a little from his head, and when they had addressed their speech to him on the blessings of peace and the love and good-will borne him by his uncle of France, he again raised his hat from his head, and said several times, 'St. John, thanks; great thanks to St. John.' He then told them by the marquess of Suffolk, 'That he did not hold them as strangers, as they belonged to the household of his uncle of France, whom, of all persons in the world, after the queen his wife, he loved the best.'"

"The following day after the arrival of M. de Presigny, he gave them an audience in his privy chamber. The king was then dressed in a long robe of black velvet. The real object of this embassy was to extend the two years' truce into a permanent peace. They introduced the subject by great professions of love and amity of the king of France to his nephew, and apologies for the long delay of the queen's arrival. They added, 'that they now came to inquire after her health, and to wish them both much joy and a long-continued posterity, and that perpetual amity might be established between the kindred royalty of France and England.' Henry repeated (probably translated) what was said to his nobles, with a countenance full of satisfaction, and bade Suffolk tell the ambassadors, 'That he had great joy in hearing news of the high and mighty king his uncle, whom he loved better than any person in the

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witness the state and grand solemnity on the day of the queen's coronation, and to make a report thereof, 10*l.* each. To two minstrels of the duke of Milan, who came on the same errand, to report the same to the princes and people of their country, the king, by the advice of his council, to each of the said minstrels paid five marks. To John de Serrencourt, king René's steward, who came to witness queen Margaret's coronation, and report the same, thirty-three marks." —*Issue Rolls*, 452. King Henry's bounties on this occasion were certainly not confined to the queen's foreign followers. "He granted to William Adams, the master of the vessel which conveyed his beloved consort queen Margaret safely to England, an annuity of twenty-one marks for life, as a reward for that good and acceptable service." He also granted "a hundred pounds, to be paid out of the customs on wool and skins at Southampton, to his secretary, William Andrews, for his services during his attendance on the queen in foreign parts." —*Rymer's Fœdera*.

<sup>1</sup>Chronicle of London.

<sup>2</sup>From the ambassador's reports, 1445, Bibliothèque du Roi, copied by sir Cuthbert Sharpe, through whose kindness I have been favoured with this extract.



world, excepting the queen his wife, and that he desired the continuance of peace beyond any thing on earth ;' to which all present responded 'Amen.'"

"Henry then called the ambassadors close to him, and conversed with them familiarly. Suffolk repeated, that the king loved his uncle of France the second best in the world, on which Henry exclaimed in English, 'St. John, yes!'"

Extensive repairs and improvements had been made in all the royal palaces previously to Margaret's arrival. This was very necessary : for so many years had elapsed since a queen-consort had held her state in England, that those portions of the abodes of royalty, known by the name of "the queen's lodgings," were absolutely desolated and unfit for her reception, till a considerable outlay had been expended upon them. The royal residences at the Tower, Westminster, Eltham, and Shene, in particular, were restored to their pristine splendour, in honour of the new queen.<sup>1</sup>

For the two first years of Margaret of Anjou's union with Henry VI., cardinal Beaufort was the supreme director of the power of the crown. King Henry, new to the delights of female society, was intoxicated with the charms, the wit, and graceful manners of his youthful bride, of whom an elegant French historian thus speaks :—"England had never seen a queen more worthy of a throne than Margaret of Anjou. No woman surpassed her in beauty, and few men equalled her in courage. It seemed as if she had been formed by Heaven to supply to her royal husband the qualities which he required, in order to become a great king."<sup>2</sup> Another chronicler, quoted by Stow, says—"This woman excelled all others, as well in beauty and favour as in art and policy, and was in courage inferior to none."

These brilliant characteristics were yet in the germ, when Margaret of Anjou was unfortunately called to share the throne of England at a period of life when her judgment was immature, and the perilous endowments of wit, genius, and lively perceptiveness, were more likely to create enemies than to secure friends. She had been deeply piqued and offended at the opposition the duke of Gloucester had made to her marriage, and, with the petulance of a spoiled child, she took every occasion of mortifying him, by a foolish display of her unbounded influence over the king, and her regard for cardinal Beaufort and the duke of Suffolk, his sworn foes.

To cardinal Beaufort, indeed, she was indebted for her elevation to the pride and power of royalty, and, with all the devotion of a young heart, she resigned herself wholly to his direction. Independently of political considerations, cardinal Beaufort was exceedingly fond of Margaret, who was a frequent visitor at his house in Waltham Forest, where there was a state chamber magnificently fitted up for her sole use,

<sup>1</sup> Acts of the Privy Council, by sir H. Nicolas, vol. vi. p. 32. The poverty of Henry VI.'s exchequer at this period is deplorably evidenced by the piteous supplication of William Cleve, chaplain to the king and clerk of the works, "for money to pay the poor labourers their weekly wages," which, he states, "he has the utmost pain and difficulty to purvey."

<sup>2</sup> Orleans.

called the queen's chamber, with hangings of cloth of gold of Damascus. These the cardinal afterwards bequeathed to queen Margaret.<sup>1</sup>

The great riches of this ambitious prelate enabled him to administer, from time to time, in a very acceptable manner, to the necessities of the royal pair; and the flattering attention with which he treated the young queen so completely won her confidence, that, under his direction, the talents and fascinations of this accomplished girl became the powerful spells through which he obtained unbounded ascendancy over the councils of his royal nephew.

It was in the second year of Margaret's marriage that the memorable parliament of February, 1447, was summoned to meet at Bury, the ministers of king Henry having business to accomplish which they dared not venture in the vicinity of the metropolis. This was the destruction of the duke of Gloucester, the darling of the people, and the heir-presumptive to the throne. Gloucester, probably with a view to counteract the queenly influence, had shown an alarming inclination to make common cause with the duke of York. This prince had been lately superseded in his office of regent of France, and supplanted by his enemy the duke of Somerset, cardinal Beaufort's nephew. By some historians it has been supposed, that it was to avert a coalition so perilous to the government of king Henry, that the crooked politicians of whom his cabinet was composed, devised their plans for ridding themselves of their formidable opponent.<sup>2</sup> The king and queen proceeded to Bury with their court, and all the commonalty of Suffolk were summoned to attend the king there, in their most defensible array; a proof that some danger to the royal person was apprehended.

The parliament met, February 10th, in the refectory of St. Edmund's Abbey. The session was opened, not by the king, but by his chancellor Stafford, archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>3</sup> On the first day, business proceeded smoothly; a speaker was chosen, and an exchange of queen Margaret's revenues of 4666*l.* 13*s.*, out of the customs, for certain lands and hereditaments settled on her for life, was confirmed; but, on the second day of the session, all England was astonished by the arrest of the duke of Gloucester on a charge of high treason.<sup>4</sup> He was committed to close custody under a strong guard. "What evidence the king had of his uncle's guilt," says Whethampstede, "we know not, but nothing could persuade him of his innocence."

Seventeen days after his arrest, the duke of Gloucester was found dead in his bed, but without any marks of violence on his person.<sup>5</sup> His

<sup>1</sup> "I bequeath to my lady, the queen, *lectum blodium de panno aureo de Damasco*, which hung in her chamber in my mansion of Waltham, in which my said lady the queen lay when she was at the said manor. *Item*, I bequeath to my lord the king, my dish or plate of gold for spices, and my cup of gold enamelled with images. *Item*, I bequeath to Thomas Barnaby, page to my lady the queen, 20*l.* and a cup of silver gilt.—*Codicil to cardinal Beaufort's will, quoted in Cassen's Lives of the Bishops of Winchester.*

<sup>2</sup> Carte. Guthrie.

<sup>3</sup> Parliamentary History.

<sup>4</sup> He was arrested by John viscount Beaumont.

<sup>5</sup> Lingard. Fabyan says six, and Stow twenty-four days, after his arrest. Rapiu and Hall assert that he was found dead on the following morning.

body was produced in both houses of parliament, and exposed to public view for several days; but these measures failed to remove the suspicions which so sudden a death, under such circumstances, naturally excited throughout England. No actual proof, however, exists, that he was murdered, and Whethampstede, a contemporary and warm partisan of Gloucester, states, "that he died of an illness that seized him on his arrest;" so does William of Worcester; and no writer of that period attempts to implicate the queen, as a party concerned in that transaction. Rapin, indeed, suffers his prejudices against Margaret to betray him into the following unauthenticated assertions, as to her share in the supposed murder. After stating that Henry's ministers had resolved to compass the destruction of the duke of Gloucester, he says—"The queen, who was of a bold and enterprising genius, was the person who first encouraged this resolution. At least, the historians insinuate as much, if they have not said it."

Who these historians are, Rapin has not thought proper to inform his readers; but, in the same conclusive strain of reasoning, he proceeds to say—"And, indeed, the ministry would never have ventured upon such an action, without having her at their head."

A responsible leader, in sooth, would a girl of queen Margaret's age have made, in a business of that kind; if, indeed, cardinal Beaufort, who had treasured up the accumulated rancours of six-and-twenty years of unquenchable hatred against Gloucester, and before she was born had threatened to decide their deadly quarrel "by setting England on a field,"<sup>1</sup> would have asked her sanction for wreaking his long-cherished vengeance on his adversary. Did Rapin remember that these ministers, of whom cardinal Beaufort was the master-spirit, were the same people, who, three years before Margaret of Anjou set her foot in England, had devised, and successfully carried into effect, the subtlest plot that ever was imagined, against the duchess of Gloucester?<sup>2</sup> and could *they* have required the prompting and advice of a girl of seventeen, to work out their scheme of vengeance on the duke, of which that blow was the sure prelude? There can be little doubt that the destruction of the duke of Gloucester would have been accomplished, if Margaret of Anjou had never entered this country; and it is scarcely probable that she was even entrusted with so important a secret, since her greatest misfortunes were caused by unguarded manifestations of her prejudices and partialities, for which she is greatly condemned by Philip de Comines, her contemporary.

Within eight weeks after the death of Gloucester, cardinal Beaufort

<sup>1</sup> See cardinal Beaufort's letter to the duke of Bedford, 1426, in the old Chronicles, and Parliamentary History, where there is a curious account of the quarrels between Beaufort and Gloucester.

<sup>2</sup> The accusation and disgrace of Eleanor Cobham, duchess of Gloucester, are too familiar to every reader to require recapitulation. Beaufort, Suffolk, and the archbishop of Canterbury, were her judges. Many persons, and even school histories, misled by Shakspeare, are fully persuaded that Margaret of Anjou (then a child in Lorraine) effected the disgrace and ruin of the duchess of Gloucester.

was summoned to his great account, leaving the court to struggle with the storm he had conjured up, bereft of the support of his talents, his experience, and his all-powerful wealth.

King Henry, absorbed in his studies and heavenward contemplations, shrank from the toils and cares of empire, and certainly evinced more interest in the prosperity and regulations of his newly founded college at Eton, than in the government of his kingdom; and Margaret, then only just entering her eighteenth year, found the executive power of the crown of England left to her sole direction. Alas, for any female on whom so fearful a responsibility devolves, at such a tender and unreflective age, ere the difficult lessons of self-government have been learned, or the warm confiding impulses of the youthful heart have been taught the necessity of restraint and concealment! Margaret of Anjou had, doubtless, acted with the best intentions, when, on her first arrival in England, instead of allying herself with foreign advisers or female favourites, she resigned herself to the guidance of her royal husband's favourite uncle and councillor, a man of cardinal Beaufort's venerable years, and reputation for wisdom. At his death, she naturally, unacquainted as she was with the manners, customs, and prejudices of her consort's subjects, continued her confidence to the cabinet he had formed, at the head of which was her first English friend and acquaintance, the duke of Suffolk.

Shakspeare has greatly misled his readers in regard of the *liaison* between this unpopular minister and Margaret of Anjou, by representing her first as his prisoner, and, after her marriage with the king, as his paramour. The one she certainly never was, and the great disparity in their ages renders the other very unlikely. Suffolk, at the period when his acquaintance with the royal beauty, then just fourteen, commenced at her father's court, far from being the gallant, gay Lothario that poetry and romance have portrayed, was a grey-haired soldier-statesman, who had served thirty-four years in the French campaigns, before he became a member of Henry VI.'s cabinet. He must, therefore, have been on the shady side of fifty when he acted as his sovereign's proxy at the nuptials of Margaret of Anjou. Suffolk, be it remembered, too, was a married man, devotedly attached to his wife, who held the principal place of honour about the person of the queen; and, even after his death, his duchess continued to retain her post and influence in the court of Margaret, where she appears to have been almost as unpopular as her unfortunate lord; for her name stands the second in the list of those whom the parliament, in 1451, petitioned the king to banish from his household and realm;<sup>1</sup> a request that was not complied with by the sovereign, as the queen would not consent to be deprived of the company and services of her first English friend. Suffolk was, after all, most probably indebted to his duchess for the credit he enjoyed with their royal mistress.

It was no enviable season for queen Margaret, and the unpopular minister by whom her marriage had been negotiated, when the expira-

<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary Rolls.

tion of the truce with France left the government of her royal husband the alternative of fulfilling the conditions of the treaty on which it was based, or renewing the war without the means of supporting the honour of England.

Not even that consummate politician, cardinal Beaufort, had ventured to declare to the parliament the secret article by which Maine, the key of Normandy, was to be restored to the house of Anjou; and now the responsibility of that article fell on Suffolk and the queen. Most unfortunate it was for Margaret, that her own family were the parties who received the benefits of these sacrifices, for which her misjudging interference in the government at this crisis rendered *her* accountable, though they had been solemnly guaranteed by king Henry and his council, at the treaty of Tours, before she was even affianced to him.

Bellicose as the character of Margaret of Anjou became in after years, when the stormy temper of the times, and the nature of the circumstances with which she had to contend, kindled all the energies of her spirit into Amazonian fierceness, not even her meek and saintly consort laboured more earnestly, at this period, than herself, to preserve that peace of which her own strong sense taught her England was in such need.

During the brief interval that preceded the ruinous war into which the government of England was soon after forced, Margaret commenced the foundation of Queen's College, Cambridge. This college was dedicated to the honour of Almighty God, by the royal foundress, and devoted by her to the increase of learning and virtue, under the tutelary auspices of St. Margaret, her patroness, and St. Bernard. The first stone was laid by sir John (afterwards lord) Wenlock, in behalf of, and as deputy for, queen Margaret, with this inscription in Latin:—

"The Lord shall be a refuge to our sovereign lady, queen Margaret, and this stone shall be for a token of the same."<sup>1</sup>

Margaret also sought to turn the attention of the people to manufactures in woollen and silk; but the temper of the times suited not the calm tenor of peaceful employments. A spirit of adventurous enterprise had been nourished during the French wars, and, from the princes of the blood-royal to the peasantry, there was a thirsting for fighting fields, and a covetous desire of appropriating the spoils of plundered towns and castles, pervading all classes. The very misery of the people of England rendered them combative, and eager to exchange the monotony of

<sup>1</sup> This college was involved in the misfortunes of its foundress, but was preserved by the care of Andrew Ducket, a Carmelite friar, who for forty years held the office of provost. Queen Margaret made over to her college possessions to the amount of 200*l.*, which, though no mean sum in those days, was but a slender endowment; but her liberal designs were not frustrated. What she began was continued and completed by Elizabeth, consort to king Edward IV. The usual similarity between the armorial bearings of founders, and of their foundations, is observable in the arms of Queen's College. The only difference between the arms of Margaret, as given in "*Regal Heraldry*," and those of the college, as now borne, are, that the college arms are surrounded by a *bordure* *vert*.

reluctant and ill-paid labour, for the excitement of war. It was no easy matter to convert the men who had fought at Agincourt, or their sons, into tillers of the soil, or weavers of woollen cloths. As for the silk manufactures, they were chiefly carried on by a company of females, who went by the name of "the silk women," and were regarded with jealous displeasure by the London mercers, who petitioned the king against the establishment of this industrious sisterhood, as an infringement on their manly rights and privileges.

In the commencement of the year 1449, Charles VII. renewed hostilities with England, and in the course of two years re-conquered most of the towns in Normandy. The details of the losses and disasters of the English forces, under the command of the duke of Somerset, belong rather to general history than to the memoirs of queen Margaret; although they had a fatal influence on her fortunes, by rendering her an object of suspicion and ill-will to the nation; causing the name of Frenchwoman to be applied to her as a term of reproach, by those who well knew the art of appealing to the prejudices, and exciting the passions, of the vulgar against her. The partisans of the duke of York failed not to attribute all the losses in France and Normandy to the misgovernment of the queen, insinuating, "that the king was fitter for a cloister than a throne, and had, in a manner, deposed himself, by leaving the affairs of his kingdom in the hands of a woman, who merely used his name to conceal her usurpation, since, according to the laws of England, a queen-consort hath no power, but title only."<sup>1</sup> Queen Margaret, willing to procure the absence of the duke of York at any price, blindly increased his political power by investing him with the government of Ireland. York had left a strong party in England, at the head of which were those powerful nobles, Richard Neville earl of Salisbury, and his son, the earl of Warwick, the brother and nephew of his duchess. These were the great political opponents of the queen, whom they ventured not publicly to attack, otherwise than by directing the voice of the people against the measures of the court, and attributing the disastrous state of the country to the treasonable practices of her favourite minister.

Suffolk boldly stood up in the House of Lords, and complained that "he had been traduced by public report; and demanded of his enemies, if they had aught to lay to his charge, that they should specify his crimes."<sup>2</sup> He adverted to the services his family and himself had performed for their country, and stated that his father and three of his brethren had been slain in France; that he had himself served in the wars thirty-four years, and, being but a knight when he was taken prisoner,<sup>3</sup> he had paid 20,000 crowns for his ransom; that he had been of

<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary History.

<sup>2</sup> Rolls of Parliament.

<sup>3</sup> This event happened in 1429, the same year Margaret of Anjou was born, when the Maid of Orleans took Jargeau by storm. Suffolk was the governor of the town, and when great part of the garrison was slain, being hard pressed to surrender, by William Renaud, the following colloquy passed between them in the breach:—"Are you a gentleman?" demanded Suffolk, finding it impossible to escape. "I am," replied Renaud. "But are you a knight?" rejoined the earl. "I am not," answered Renaud. "Kneel down, then," said Suffolk, "that

the order of the Garter thirty years, and a councillor of the king fifteen years, and had been seventeen years in the wars without returning home; and asking God's mercy, as he had been true to the king and realm, he required his purgation."<sup>1</sup>

It is scarcely possible to imagine any thing more frivolous than the series of articles which were exhibited against the luckless premier. In the first of these, he is charged with "having intended to marry his son John to Margaret Beaufort, the heiress of the late John duke of Somerset, with the design of murdering and destroying the king, and then declaring her to be the heiress of the crown, for lack of heirs of the king's body."<sup>2</sup> This most absurd accusation is in itself a refutation of all the scandalous imputations which modern historians have cast upon the friendship between the duke of Suffolk and queen Margaret, since her ruin must have been comprehended in the murder and destruction of the king. Margaret was, at that period, only nineteen; and, though childless as yet, there was a possibility of her having many children, as she was considered one of the finest women in the world. It was, perhaps, this very article which first gave the aspiring family of Beaufort an eye to the succession to the throne, in the event of a failure of the royal Plantagenet line of Lancaster. The accusation was treated with infinite contempt by Suffolk; and his replies to the other articles being such as to baffle his enemies, they, at the end of three weeks, exhibited eighteen fresh charges against him; but it is to be observed, that neither in these, nor in the previous catalogue of misdemeanours, is there the slightest allusion to queen Margaret, nor is her name mentioned in any record or contemporary chronicle in connexion with Suffolk; not even in the satirical anonymous verses that were circulated on the arrest and imprisonment of that unpopular minister.<sup>3</sup>

Yet Rapin and other modern writers have not scrupled to assert, "that queen Margaret, in her anxiety to preserve her favourite, caused the parliament, on his arrest, to be prorogued to Leicester, where he attended king Henry and herself, and appeared publicly in his place as prime minister." Now the incontestable evidence of the records of parliament prove, that the parliament was summoned to meet at Leicester, September, 1449, five months before the arrest of Suffolk; but the peers and commons, taking warning by the events of the parliament that sat at Bury St. Edmunds, refused to meet any where but at Westminster.<sup>4</sup> Therefore the writs were re-issued, commanding them to meet at Westminster, November 6th. The same day they were prorogued to London, on account of the plague; adjourned from London again to Westminster, December 4th; and on the 17th adjourned till January 22d,<sup>5</sup> at Westminster, where Suffolk, as we have seen, in a fatal hour for himself,

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I may make you one, for I cannot otherwise yield to you." This was accordingly done, and affords a rich characteristic of the age of chivalry.

<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary Rolls, 28 Henry VI. No. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> For specimens of these political squibs of the fifteenth century, see *Excerpta Historica*, pp. 160-162, and 279; and Cottonian MSS., Charters, ii. 23.

<sup>4</sup> Rolls of Parliament, 28th of Henry VI.

<sup>5</sup> Parliamentary History.

introduced the discussion of which the commons took advantage to obtain his arrest.

These records prove that Suffolk was never released from his imprisonment, after he was once committed to the Tower, till after his sentence of banishment for five years was pronounced, March 17th, by king Henry, who resorted to that temporising expedient, in the vain hope of preserving him from the fury of his enemies.<sup>1</sup> The parliament then sitting at Westminster was prorogued March 30th, and ordered to meet at Leicester, April 29th, the day before Suffolk embarked to fulfil his evil destiny. Two thousand persons had previously assembled in St. Giles's Fields, to intercept him on his discharge from the Tower, March 18th. They surprised his servants, but Suffolk succeeded in escaping to Ipswich, where, after arranging his affairs, he wrote that beautiful and pathetic letter to his son, which affords such touching evidence of his loyalty to his sovereign, and his devotion to his beloved wife. He sailed from Ipswich, April 30th, with two small vessels, and sent a pinnace before him, to inquire whether he might be permitted to land at Calais; but the pinnace was captured by a squadron of men-of-war, and immediately the *Nicolas*, of the Tower,<sup>2</sup> bore down upon the duke's vessels. He was ordered on board, and received with the ominous salutation of "Welcome, traitor!"<sup>3</sup> He underwent a mock trial from the sailors, by whom he was condemned to suffer death. On the second morning after his capture a small boat came alongside, in which were a block, a rusty sword, and an executioner. They lowered the duke into it, telling him "he should die like a knight," and at the fifth stroke his head was struck off, and was left with the severed body on Dover sands, where they were found by his chaplain, and received honourable interment in the collegiate church of Wingfield, in Suffolk.

The consummation of this tragedy, far from calming the feverish state of excitement to which the public mind had been stimulated, was only the first sign and token of the scenes of blood and horror that were in store for England. Pestilence had aggravated the woes of a starving and disaffected population, and the inflammatory representations of political

<sup>1</sup> Rolls of Parliament, 28th of Henry VI.

<sup>2</sup> It is a memorable fact, that this vessel, thus acting in defiance of the crown (as, indeed, did the whole squadron by which the exiled duke was pursued), was part of the royal navy placed at the disposal of the confederate peers by Henry Holland, the young duke of Exeter, heir-presumptive to the royal house of Lancaster by the legitimate female line. He had lately succeeded his father in the office of high admiral, and this was the lawless use he made of its power. He did not anticipate the hour when his own corpse would be left on the sands of the same coast. The death of the elder Exeter is commemorated in the political poem (before alluded to as among the Cottonian MSS.) with those of the dukes of Bedford, Gloucester, and Exeter. These Lancasterian princes are personified by their respective badges:—"The root is dead," Bedford; whose device was the root of a tree. "The swan is gone," Gloucester; whose device was a swan. "The fiery cresset hath lost his light;" this alludes to the high admiral Exeter, whose picturesque device was the badge of the admiralty, a flaming cresset, or fire-basket, raised on a pole, being a sort of signal along the coast serving for light-houses. See *Excerpta Historica*, p. 161.

<sup>3</sup> Lingard, vol. i. p. 135.



incendiaries, acting upon the misery of the lower classes, caused the terrific outbreak of national frenzy which immediately after this event manifested itself in the rebellion under Jack Cade. It was to suppress this formidable insurrection that Henry VI. prepared for his first essay in arms, by setting up his standard, and going in person to attack Cade and his rabble rout, who were encamped on Blackheath in formidable array. At the news of the sovereign's approach at the head of fifteen thousand men, the hot valour of the captain of the great assembly of Kent, and his followers, received an immediate check, and they fled to Sever Oaks.

Queen Margaret accompanied her lord on this expedition; but so little of the warlike spirit for which she was afterwards so fatally renowned did she manifest at this crisis, that when king Henry would have followed up his success by pursuing the insurgents to their retreat, her feminine terrors, and anxiety for his safety, prevailed upon him not to imperil his person by going any further.<sup>1</sup> He therefore, in compliance with her entreaties, gave up the command of his army to sir Humphrey Stafford and his brother William, and returned to London with her.<sup>2</sup>

Never did Margaret commit a greater error, than by thus allowing her tenderness for her royal husband to betray him into conduct so unbefitting the son of the conqueror of France and Normandy.

The rebels, attributing the weakness of the king to fear, took courage, rallied, and defeated the royalists, who, with their two generals, were cut to pieces. The victors then returned to Blackheath; and when the archbishop of Canterbury, and the duke of Buckingham, were despatched from the court, to treat with them, they found Cade dressed in a suit of gilded armour (the spoils of sir Humphrey Stafford), encompassed by his victorious troops, and giving himself the airs of a sovereign. He positively refused to treat with any one but the king himself, nor with him unless he would come to the Blackheath in person, and grant all their demands.

When this answer was returned to the king and queen, together with the news that the rebels were ready to march to London, they were thrown into such alarm, that, leaving the Tower under the command of the lord Scales, and the valiant sir Matthew Gough, they fled to Kenilworth Castle.<sup>3</sup> We fear this cowardly proceeding must be attributed to the same fond weakness, on the part of queen Margaret, which influenced the retreat of the king from Blackheath; and it is to be observed, that till she became a mother, and the rights of her child were at stake, no trait of fierce or warlike propensities was ever manifested by her.

On the 2nd of July, the rebels, who had previously taken up their quarters at Southwark, entered London, when Cade smote his staff on London-stone, with these memorable words, "Now is Mortimer lord of London!"<sup>4</sup>

The proceedings of this motley company of reformers, and their pun-

<sup>1</sup> Guthrie.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Guthrie. Stow.

<sup>4</sup> Cade pretended to be sir John Mortimer. See memoir of Joanna of Navarre.

chinello leader, in London, belong to general history; and it may suffice here to notice, that the pacific influence of two churchmen, the archbishop of Canterbury, and Waynflete, bishop of Winchester, succeeded in calming a storm, which had, in its brief but terrific progress, shaken the throne, deluged the capital of England with blood, and threatened to subvert law, social order, and the sacred rights of property.

The worthy prelates prevailed on the insurgents to lay down their arms, by affixing king Henry's seal to a general pardon, to which Cade was the only exception.<sup>1</sup>

An infringement of these conditions was most improperly attempted by queen Margaret, on her return to London with king Henry. The fact is evidenced in a private letter from John Payn, an esquire in the service of sir John Falstolf, who, after pitifully detailing the manner "in which he had been despoiled and maltreated by the rebels, and how he had been carried off by them sorely against his will, and exposed to the peril of the battle of the bridge," adds, "and after that *hurling* was over, the bishop of Rochester impeached me to queen Margaret, and so I was arrested, and was in the Marshalsea, in right great *duress* and fear of my life. They would have had me impeach my master, sir John Falstolf, of treason, and, because I would not, had me up at Westminster, and there would have sent me to the gaol-house at Windsor; but two cousins of my wife's and mine, who were yeomen of the crown, went to king Henry, and got grace for me."<sup>2</sup>

Margaret's desire to implicate sir John Falstolf probably had reference to his previous conduct with regard to her countryman Champchevrier, no less than to the suspicions she entertained of his loyalty. Subsequent events, however, prove that the queen had correct information as to Falstolf's practices against the government, for he became one of the most zealous partisans of the house of York.

Margaret and Henry returned to the metropolis about the 10th of July, 1450, and the disclosures of some of Cade's accomplices in the late insurrection, left no doubt, on the mind of the queen, that the duke of York had been the instigator of the revolt. This conviction was confirmed by the return of that prince, without permission, from his government in Ireland. He was attended on his road to London by a retinue of four thousand men, to the great terror of the court. York, having extorted from the king a promise to summon a parliament, withdrew to his castle of Fotheringay.<sup>3</sup>

The return of the duke of Somerset, at this crisis, inspired the timid sovereign with some degree of political courage, and Margaret soon transferred to this prince the partial confidence she had formerly reposed in his uncle, cardinal Beaufort. Their near relationship to the king, by whom the ties of kindred were very powerfully felt and acknowledged,

<sup>1</sup> Cade, finding himself abandoned by his followers, seized a small vessel in the river, and set sail for Rochester, where the vessel and cargo were stopped by the officers of government. Cade made his escape, but was slain in a garden at Heyfield, by Alexander Iden, the sheriff of Kent, who received the benefit of the reward that had been offered for his head—viz., 1000*l*.

<sup>2</sup> Sir John Fenn's Collection of the Paston Letters.

<sup>3</sup> Lingard.

sanctioned the queen in the close friendship which, from first to last, subsisted between her and the Beaufort princes of the house of Lancaster. Unfortunately, however, the unpopularity in which the disasters in France and Normandy had involved Somerset very soon extended to herself, when it was perceived that he was shielded, by court favour, from the fury of the commons, and the jealousy of the peers. He was impeached by parliament, and committed to the Tower, but, immediately the short and stormy session was over, he was released, and promoted to the high office formerly enjoyed by Suffolk. He has been said to owe his elevation entirely to the influence of the queen; but he appears to have been the especial favourite of his royal kinsman, king Henry.

The violent temper of Somerset was the means of precipitating the direful collision of the rival factions, whose strife for twenty years deluged England with kindred blood. According to historical tradition, those fatal badges of the contending houses of York and Lancaster, "the pale and purple rose," were assumed to distinguish the rival factions during the memorable dispute between Somerset and the earl of Warwick, in the Temple Gardens, when Somerset, to collect the suffrages of the by-standers, plucked a red rose, and Warwick a white rose, and each called upon every man present to declare his party, by taking a rose of the colour chosen by him whose cause he favoured. This was the prologue to that great national tragedy, which ended in the extinction of the royal line and name of Plantagenet. That enlightened statesman-historian, Philip de Comines, who was well acquainted with queen Margaret, attributes all the misfortunes that afterwards befell her, and the overthrow of the house of Lancaster, to her rash interposition in the feud between Somerset and Warwick, in which she indicated her preference for the former, in a way that never was forgiven by Warwick. "The queen had acted much more prudently," says Comines, "in endeavouring to have adjusted the dispute between them, than to have said, 'I am of this party, and I will maintain it.'" And so it proved by the event.

It is probable that the red rose was originally worn by Margaret as a compliment to Somerset, in token that she espoused his cause, and that his great political opponent, the duke of York, assumed the white, as a symbol of hostility to him and his adherents.<sup>1</sup>

Rosettes of white and crimson riband, or even of paper, among the common soldiers, were worn as the substitutes of these ill-omened

<sup>1</sup> Shakspeare, in his spirited version of the scene in the Temple Gardens, errs in chronology, by placing it prior to the marriage of the king and Margaret of Anjou. He also uses a poetical license in representing Richard, duke of York as the leading character engaged in the dispute, while Warwick, merely acting as his second, says, "I pluck this white rose with Plantagenet." Suffolk, who had been dead some months when the veritable dispute occurred, is made to exclaim—"I pluck this red rose with young Somerset." These badges were only revived; for Edmund, earl of Lancaster, the brother of Edward I., had, as Camden declares, red roses emblazoned on his tomb in Westminster Abbey, and Edward the Black Prince wears a coronet of white roses, in his portrait drawn in Richard II.'s missal in the Harleian Collection.

flowers, by the partisans of the royal claimants of the throne, during the struggle between the houses of York and Lancaster, poetically called, from these badges, the "War of the Roses."

The duke of York, having assumed a very formidable position in the state, even that of an armed dictator to the sovereign, Margaret united with Somerset in persuading Henry, that the time for concession and temporising measures was past, and that his best policy now would be to crush rebellion in its nest, by marching to attack his foe. In pursuance of this advice, king Henry took the field in person, February 16th, 1452, and advanced towards the Welsh border. York, instead of standing his ground, took a circuitous route towards the metropolis, and encamped on Burnt-heath, in Kent. The king, a few hours afterwards, took up his post about four miles distant. The tenderness of Henry's heart, and his scruples at the idea of shedding his people's blood, led him to negotiate when he ought to have fought. York demanded that his old adversary, Somerset, should be placed under arrest, preparatory to an arraignment for his misdemeanours. Henry conceded this point by the advice of his prelates; York then disbanded his army, and came unattended to confer with his sovereign in his tent.<sup>1</sup> Somerset, meantime, having represented to the queen the impolicy of sacrificing a faithful friend to purchase a deceitful reconciliation with an audacious foe, obtained his liberation by her orders. By Margaret's contrivance, Somerset was concealed behind the arras of the royal pavilion, as a secret witness of the conference between his adversary and the king.

York, who imagined the minister was safely bestowed in the Tower, assured the king "that he had been induced to take up arms on account of Somerset alone, in order that he might be brought to condign punishment." On this, Somerset, unable to restrain his choler, rushed from his hiding-place, and defied York, charging him to his face with designs on the crown.<sup>2</sup> York fiercely retorted on Somerset, upbraiding him with his misgovernment in France, and the loss of Normandy, and finished by reproaching Henry with his violation of his royal word. Henry, who does not appear to have been aware of the proximity of his premier, remained speechless and amazed during this stormy scene, which was closed by the arrest of the duke of York, as he quitted the tent. According to most historians, this was done by the order of the queen.<sup>3</sup> Henry, however, would not permit him to be harmed;<sup>4</sup> and he was released, on condition of swearing a solemn oath of fealty to the king in St. Paul's Cathedral, March 10th; after which he was permitted to retire to his castle of Wigmore, where his son, the earl of March, afterwards king Edward IV., was raising an army for his rescue.

Queen Margaret, having gained her point, in retaining Somerset at the head of the government, was, in consequence, subjected to aspersions from the other party, derogatory to her reputation. Somerset was, like his predecessor, Suffolk, a man in the decline of life, the father of sons older than the queen, and so devotedly attached to his own wife, that he had sacrificed his honour to his tenderness for her person, during his

<sup>1</sup>Guthrie.    <sup>2</sup>Speed. Rapin. Hall.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Hall. Stow. Rapin.

disastrous regency in France.<sup>1</sup> But what is there of falsehood that the demon of party will not invent, to vilify its victims, or of improbability, that the vulgar will not believe and circulate, especially, if in the shape of scandal on royalty?

During the deceitful calm that for a brief interval succeeded the late tempest, Margaret turned her attention to foreign affairs, and, through her influence, the renowned Talbot, earl of Shrewsbury, was despatched, with such forces as could be raised, to the assistance of the English party in Guienne. The aged hero achieved some brilliant successes in the first instance; but it was impossible for the queen, struggling, as she was, with the mighty faction that opposed her in parliament, to support a war against the overwhelming force of France. Talbot was borne down by numbers, and slain in his eightieth year; his brave adherents were cut to pieces.

In the valiant Talbot, Margaret lost one of her most devoted friends — one of the few, out of the many warrior peers of England, at that rude era, who possessed a mind sufficiently cultivated to appreciate the learning and accomplishments of the fair Provençal queen. The magnificent illuminated manuscript volume which he presented to her is a surviving monument of his exquisite taste in the fine arts; while his dedicatory lines, addressed to his royal patroness, contain a delicate testimonial of his opinion of her talents and acquirements. He requests her “to explain to his sovereign any thing that may appear difficult to understand in the book: for,” says he, “though you speak English so well, you have not forgotten your French.”

The illuminated title-page represents the queen seated by Henry VI., and surrounded by their court, receiving the volume from the hands of Talbot.<sup>2</sup> The state-hall in which they are assembled is worthy of attention. The royal seat fills up a rich oriel, with vaulted ceiling, groined, and painted blue, with gold stars; the clustered windows are long and lancet-shaped, but the tops of the lancets are rounded. Probably the scene took place in some hall of the destroyed apartments, in the Tower or Westminster Palace. An arras of gold and colours, representing the royal arms in numerous chequers, is stretched from pillar to pillar, and forms the back-ground of the royal seat, which is a broad, low divan, covered with cloth. On this, Margaret, robed in queenly costume, sits, with her right hand locked in that of king Henry's, who sits by her in regal array. Margaret wears a royal crown; her hair, of a pale golden colour, is most gracefully flowing from under her diadem, and falls in profusion down her back and shoulders, and over her regal mantle, which is pale purple, fastened round the bust with bands of gold and gems. The dress beneath the mantle is the furred *cote-hardi*, precisely the same as before alluded to. She is exquisitely lovely, and very majestic, in this carefully finished portrait, which does not represent her

<sup>1</sup> Hall.

<sup>2</sup> As this mighty warrior died in 1453, Margaret's portrait must have been limned some time before that period. This magnificent folio is still in the finest preservation, in the British Museum. King's MSS.

older than in her twentieth year. Talbot is kneeling before her, presenting the very folio from which this description is taken. His dog is in attendance.<sup>1</sup> The title-page of the magnificent volume is redolent of Margaret's emblem-flower. Daisies are seen growing in the garden of the palace; daisies, with their little red buttons, are arranged in profusion up the side of the title-page; daisies swarm in clusters round her armorial bearings, and flourish in every corner of the illuminated pages of the volume. Amongst other embellishments may likewise be noted a crowned M., the queen's initial, surrounded by the garter and its motto. The queen's ladies are seen behind the royal seat, attired in heart-shaped caps, which were a graceful modification, at Margaret's court, of the monstrous horned cap of the preceding half century; they were formed of a stuffed roll, wreathed with gold and gems, and fixed in a fanciful turban shape, over a close caul of gold cloth or net-work, brought to a point, low in front, and rising behind the head. Henry's nobles are assembled in crowds, to the right of the royal seat; they are clothed in full surtouts, like the beef-eaters' dresses, but of whole colours, and trimmed with fur. They either wear round black caps, or their hair is cropped close to the head,—a fashion always prevalent in the time of war, when the helmet prevented the growth of hair.

The artists, employed by the earl of Shrewsbury in the splendid illuminations of this volume, have complimented Margaret, by portraying the queen Olympias with *her* features, and arrayed in her royal robes. The kirtle of the Macedonian queen is also powdered with Margaret's emblem-flower, the daisy. At the end of the volume is an allegorical piece, representing queen Margaret, and the principal ladies of her court, as the Virtues. Margaret, wearing her diadem and purple robe, is characterised as Faith; king Henry as Honour.

The death of the chivalric veteran by whom Margaret had been held in such especial honour, and who was regarded by England as the greatest captain of the age, was a severe blow to the court, and a national calamity which was mourned by all classes of the people. It was at this gloomy period, when the ill-success that attended the arms of England abroad increased the clamours of the enemies of the government at home, that queen Margaret, for the first time, afforded a prospect of bringing an heir to the throne. About six months before the birth of her child, Margaret had to mourn over the death of her beloved mother, the high-minded and heroic Isabella of Lorraine, who died, February 28, 1453, aged only forty-three.<sup>2</sup> Margaret's mourning weeds were

<sup>1</sup> The cognisance of the Talbots.

<sup>2</sup> Isabella, queen of Sicily, died in the arms of her daughter Yolante, and her son-in-law, Ferry of Vandemonte, by whom she had been tenderly watched in her long and painful illness, while Margaret, her youngest and best beloved, was detained by many cares in England. Isabella was succeeded in the duchy of Lorraine by her heir, John of Calabria. King René married, secondly, Jeanne de Laval, who was at that time courted by Margaret's former lover, the count de Nevers; she preferred king René. She was of so grave a character, that she was never known to laugh but once, at a pageant devised by her royal husband—namely, a boat filled with water-pipes, which played on every side,

blue, probably of that deep, dark, melancholy tint which has recently been called French black.<sup>1</sup>

The loss of a mother—of such a mother, too, as Isabella of Lorraine—could not have been otherwise than keenly felt by Margaret, who had, in childhood and early youth, shared and solaced so many of her trying adversities. But a heavier calamity than even the death of that dearly beloved parent oppressed the royal matron, as the dreaded hour of peril and anguish drew near, from which the consorts of monarchs are no more exempted than the wives of peasants.

When Margaret was in the eighth month of her pregnancy, and the political horizon became daily more gloomy, in anticipation of an event more feared than wished by all parties, king Henry was seized with one of those alarming attacks of malady, to which his grandfather, Charles VI. of France, was subject. The agitating character of public events, and the difficulties with which the court had had to contend, for the last four years, had been too much for a prince of acute sensibility, and who had, moreover, hereditary tendency to inflammation of the brain. For a time both mind and body sank under the accumulated pressure, and he remained in a state that left little hope for his life and none for his reason.

Margaret had doubtless been long aware of the dark shadow that impended over her royal lord, and felt the strong necessity of thinking and acting for him, at seasons, when his judgment could not be trusted to form decisions for himself, on any matter of importance. She has been blamed for encouraging him to spend his time, in pursuits fitter for the cloister than the throne; but, considering the circumstances of his case, she acted with equal tenderness and prudence, in directing his attention to tranquil and sedative amusements, instead of perplexing him with the turmoils and strong excitement of politics.

King Henry was at Clarendon when he was first seized with his dangerous malady; but after a few days he was by slow degrees conveyed to his palace at Westminster, where queen Margaret, on the 13th of October, 1453, gave birth to a prince, the unfortunate Edward of Lancaster, whom Speed pathetically calls "the child of sorrow and infelicity."

Henry remained vibrating between life and death, and perfectly unconscious of an event the anticipation of which had, a few months earlier, been hailed by him with transports of joy. The Parliamentary Rolls bear witness of the munificent reward he bestowed on Richard Tunstal, his squire of the body, whose office it was, by a strange etiquette of the middle ages, to announce publicly to the king, for the information of the court, the hopeful situation of the queen. Forty marks per annum were granted from the duchy of Lancaster by king Henry, in these words, "Because Richard Tunstal, esq., made unto us the first comfortable relation and notice, that our most dearly beloved wife the queen

and completely drenched those spectators who did not use some agility in getting out of the way.—*Villeneuve*.

<sup>1</sup> Arundel MS., No. xxvi. p. 30.

was *encheinte*, to our most singular consolation, and to all true liege people's great joy and comfort."<sup>1</sup>

A writ of summons, under the privy seal, was issued to the ladies of the highest rank in England, to attend queen Margaret at the ceremony of her purification, which took place at the palace of Westminster on the 18th of November, in the thirty-second of the reign of Henry VI. The ladies summoned were the duchesses of Bedford, York, Norfolk the elder, Norfolk the younger, Buckingham, Somerset the elder, Somerset the younger, Exeter the elder, Exeter the younger, and Suffolk, with eight countesses, among whom may be noted the countess of Warwick, besides a viscountess and seventeen baronesses.<sup>2</sup> There is also an entry in the Pell Rolls, of the sum of 554*l.* 16*s.* 8*d.*, paid to Margaret the queen, for a richly embroidered christening mantle used at the baptism of the prince; also for twenty yards of russet cloth of gold to array the font, and five hundred and forty brown sable backs, for trimming her own churching-robe.

As the royal infant was born on St. Edward's day, queen Margaret, in the hope of propitiating the people, bestowed that name, so dear to England, on her son. This fair boy, as he is called in chronicle, was baptized by Waynflete, bishop of Winchester. Cardinal Kemp, archbishop of Canterbury, the duke of Somerset and the duchess of Buckingham, were his sponsors.<sup>3</sup>

The birth of an heir, to the long childless Lancastrian sovereign, to whom the duke of York had hitherto stood presumptively in that position, was regarded by the majority of the nation as the herald of a bloody succession war; while the partisans of York failed not to throw all the suspicion they could, on the legitimacy of the royal infant, by insinuations prejudicial to the honour of the queen.<sup>4</sup> It was also pretended by some that it was a spurious child, and by others that the son of the king and queen died soon after his birth, and another had been substituted in his place.<sup>5</sup>

Queen Margaret had not completed her twenty-fourth year, and the king was just thirty-three, when they became the parents of this their only son, whose birth, so far from being of the slightest political advantage to them, had the worst possible influence on their fortunes, by determining the duke of York to contest the crown of England with Henry, at swords' points, instead of waiting, for its natural reversion to him, at the death of his royal kinsman.

Queen Margaret, at this period, exercised the royal power, in the name of the king, assisted by the duke of Somerset, and cardinal Kemp, archbishop of Canterbury and chancellor of England. This prelate who had been in king Henry's cabinet before his marriage with Margaret of Anjou, and enjoyed his royal master's confidence, died in the December

<sup>1</sup> Vol. v., Par. Rolls, 318.

<sup>2</sup> Manuscripts of sir Matthew Hale, left by him to the Society of Lincoln's Inn. 75 Selden Collec. See Catalogue published by the rev. Joseph Hunter, p. 277.

<sup>3</sup> The monks of Westminster were remunerated, by the crown, for the tapers provided by them for the christening of the infant prince.

<sup>4</sup> Rapin. Guthrie. Hall.

<sup>5</sup> Fabyan.



following the birth of the prince, and the house of lords took advantage of his death, to depute a committee from their body, to ascertain the real state of the king, for the purpose of learning his pleasure touching the appointments left vacant by the death of the cardinal.<sup>1</sup> The commissioners proceeded to Windsor, whither the king had been removed by queen Margaret and his physicians, for change of air. They were admitted into his chamber, and declared their errand; but the king made no reply, and appeared to have lost all consciousness of the things of this world. His reason must at that time have been under a total eclipse. On the 25th of March, 1454, the committee reported to the parliament, "that they had been to wait upon the king at Windsor, and, after three interviews with him, and earnest solicitation, they could by no means obtain an answer, or token of answer, from him."<sup>2</sup>

When the situation of the king was made known to his peers of parliament, they, on the 27th of March, appointed the duke of York protector and defender of the king, during the king's pleasure, or till such time as Edward the prince should come to age of discretion.<sup>3</sup> The parliament thus evidently acted under the impression, that the king's indisposition was a mental aberration, that would last as long as he lived, and at the same time they showed a desire of preserving the rights of the reigning family, by reserving this office for an infant not six months old.

Patents, bearing the name of the king's letters patent, were read in the parliament on the 3d of April, granting to the infant prince the same allowance that was made for his royal father in the first year of his reign, with the yearly fee of two thousand marks only, besides allowances for learning to ride, and other manly exercises, "provided the same grant be in no ways prejudicial to any grant made to Margaret queen of England."

King Henry, though incapable at that time of business, is made, by similar instruments, to create his son Edward prince of Wales and earl of Chester. This was confirmed by the hands of all the lords, and by the commons in parliament.<sup>4</sup> By the same authority queen Margaret received the grant of 1000*l.* per annum for life, out of the customs, and subsidies on wools at the port of Southampton, besides sundry manors and hereditaments in the counties of Northampton, Southampton, and Oxfordshire, which were confirmed to her by this parliament.<sup>5</sup> These concessions to the queen and her infant boy, were probably granted to induce her to acquiesce in the appointment of the duke of York, to the office of protector. A medical commission of five physicians and surgeons was appointed by the duke of York and his council, to attend on the person of the king, and to watch over his health.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary History.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Acts of the Privy Council.

<sup>3</sup> Parliamentary History. Rymer's Fœdera. <sup>4</sup> Parliamentary Hist. <sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Rymer's Fœdera. The date of this commission is April 6th, and empowers those beloved masters, John Arundel, John Faceby, and William Hacliff, physicians, and Robert Warreyn, and William Marschall, surgeons, to administer to the king, at their discretion, electuaries, potions, and syrups, confections, and laxative medicines, in any form that may be thought best; baths, fomentations,

Margaret, meantime, engrossed between the first sweet cares of a mother, and the melancholy of watching over the fluctuations of her royal husband's afflicting malady,<sup>1</sup> remained personally passive amidst these great political changes. Her party, however, were in a state of activity, and claimed for her no less rights than those usually allowed to the queen-consorts of France, during the minority of an heir. Indeed, in the five clauses laid in the queen's name before the privy council,<sup>2</sup> she (in her ignorance of the English constitution) insisted on little less than absolute power, as queen-regent, during the incapacity of her husband, and the minority of her son. This requisition was rejected; soon after (and doubtless connected with this movement) the arrest of the duke of Somerset took place, by the order of the protector York, in the queen's presence-chamber. Margaret resented this insult greatly, but was unable to do any thing openly, for the protection of her friends. York proceeded to depose Somerset from his office of captain of Calais, and by letters patent, issued in the king's name, bestowed it on himself.

Henry VI. began to amend in November; by the ensuing Christmas he was so much recovered, that on St. John's day he sent his almoner to Canterbury, with his offering, and his secretary to make his oblation at the shrine of St. Edward. From the testimony of a contemporary witness, who describes the state of the king at this period, Henry appears to have been like a person just awakened from a long dream, when reason and convalescence returned. The touching particulars of the infant prince's recognition by his royal father, are thus quaintly narrated, in the letter to which we have just alluded:<sup>3</sup>

"On Monday at noon the queen came to him and brought my lord prince with her, and then he asked, 'what the prince's name was?' and the queen told him, 'Edward;' and then he held up his hands, and thanked God thereof. And he said he never knew him till that time, nor wist what was said to him, nor wist where he had been, whilst he had been sick, till now; and he asked who were the godfathers, and the

embrocations, unctions, plasters, shavings of the head, scarifications, and a variety of other infusions in the way of medical treatment. John Faceby was the favourite physician who had attended king Henry all his life. The king granted a pension of 100*l.* per annum to him at the time of his marriage with queen Margaret, as the reward of his faithful services. From the same authority we find the court dress of the king's physician was a green cloth robe and miniver cap.

<sup>1</sup>There is in the Patent Rolls of this year an order under the privy seal, dated November 12, granting to a physician of the name of William Hately, in consideration of his faithful services to king Henry, and at the earnest desire of queen Margaret, an annuity for life. This physician's name is not included in the medical junta who had been appointed by the authority of the duke of York's council to attend on the sovereign; but was probably introduced by the anxious solicitude of the queen; and as Henry's convalescence took place about this time, we can have little doubt of his being indebted to the skill of William Hately for his cure.

<sup>2</sup>This information has been afforded by the publication of some most important historical documents, edited by sir F. Madden, in the xxixth vol. p. 315, of the *Archæologia*, published since the second edition of this volume.

<sup>3</sup> Paston Letters, vol. i. p. 80.

queen told him, and he was well apaid (content). And she told him the cardinal was dead,<sup>1</sup> and he said he never knew of it till this time; then he said one of the wisest lords in this land was dead. And my lord of Winchester (bishop), and my lord of St. John of Jerusalem, were with him the morrow after Twelfth day, and he did speak to them as well as ever he did, and when they came out they wept for joy. And he saith he is in charity with all the world, and so he would all the lords were. And now he saith matins of Our Lady, and evensong, and heareth his mass devoutly."

Margaret immediately took prompt measures for Henry's restoration to the sovereign authority, by causing him to be conveyed, though still very weak, to the House of Lords, where he dissolved the parliament,<sup>2</sup> and the duke of Somerset was immediately released and reinstated in his former post.

The triumph of the queen and her party was short-lived. The duke of York retired to the marches of Wales, raised an army, with the assistance of his powerful friends and kinsmen, Salisbury and Warwick, and marched towards London, with the intention of surprising the king there. All the troops that could be mustered by the exertions of the queen and Somerset scarcely amounted to two thousand men.<sup>3</sup> On the 21st day of May the royal army lay at Watford, and the next day the king took up his head-quarters at St. Albans. The royal standard was erected in St. Peter's Street. The duke of York and his men lay at Heyfield.

King Henry was not deficient in personal courage, but his holy nature revolted from being the cause of bloodshed, and he sent a message to the duke of York, to ask, "wherefore he came in hostile array against him?" York replied "that he would not lay down his arms, unless the duke of Somerset were dismissed from king Henry's councils, and delivered up to justice." Henry for once in his life manifested something of the fiery temperament of a Plantagenet, when this answer was reported to him by the agents of the duke of York: for with a loud imprecation—the only one he was ever known to utter—he declared, "that he would deliver up his crown as soon as he would the duke of Somerset or the least soldier in his army, and that he would treat as a traitor every man who should presume to fight against him in the field."<sup>4</sup> The earl of Warwick, who commanded York's van-guard, commenced the attack, by breaking down the garden-wall which stood between the Key and the Chequer in Hollowell Street,<sup>5</sup> and led his men on through the gardens, shouting, "A Warwick! a Warwick!"

The battle lasted but an hour. The king's army, made up almost all of gentlemen, was inferior in numbers, and pent up in the town. They fought desperately, and a dreadful slaughter ensued, in the narrow streets. The king, who stood under his own standard, was wounded in the neck with an arrow, at the commencement of the fight. He remained till he was left solus under his royal banner, when he walked!

<sup>1</sup> Cardinal Kemp.

<sup>2</sup> Parliamentary History.

Guthrie

<sup>3</sup> Guthrie.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

very coolly into a baker shop close by,<sup>1</sup> where York immediately visited him, and, bending his knee, bade him, "rejoice, for the traitor Somerset was slain." Henry replied, "For God's sake, stop the slaughter of my subjects!" York then took the wounded king by the hand, and led him first to the shrine of St. Albans, and then to his apartments in the abbey.<sup>2</sup>

When the slaughter, according to his entreaty, was stopped, Henry consented to accompany the victor to London on the following day, May 24th.

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## MARGARET OF ANJOU,

### QUEEN OF HENRY VI.

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#### CHAPTER II.

Queen at Greenwich—News of defeat at St. Albans—Her despair—She is censured in Parliament—Royal family sent to Hertford—Queen's secret council at Greenwich—King restored—Queen in power—Goes to Coventry—Her tapestry portrait—Pacific negotiations—Queen in procession with York—She breaks the peace—Court at Coventry—Her flight with the king from the battle of Blore-heath—Success at Ludlow—Her visit to Norfolk—Defeat at Northampton—Queen's flight—Taken by plunderers—Escapes with her son to Harlech—King in captivity—Queen goes to Scotland—Return—Her victory at Wakefield—York's head presented to her—Her victory at St. Albans—Delivers king Henry—Retreats to York—Ferrybridge—Towton—Queen's flight to Alnwick—Skill in archery—Alliance with Scotland—Letter to the queen—She goes to France with the prince—Her champion Brezé—She sails for England—Repulsed at Tynemouth—Her perilous escape—Temporary successes—Flight from Hexham—Romantic adventures—Retires to France—Adventures at the court of Burgundy—Her residence at Verdun—Education of her son—Reconciliation with Warwick—Marriage of her son—She goes to Paris—Departs for England—Contrary winds—Lands at Weymouth—Defeat at Barnet—Her despair—Takes sanctuary—Battle of Tewksbury—Murder of her son—Brought to king Edward—Led captive to London—Lodged in the Tower—Her widowhood—Five years' captivity—Ransomed by her father—Attacked by English emigrants—Arrives at her father's court—Her residence there—Loss of beauty—Death of her father—Sale of her reversionary rights—Retires to Dampierre—Her death—Annual commemorations at her grave.

QUEEN MARGARET, on the approach of York's army, had retired to Greenwich, with her ladies and the infant prince, where she remained in a state of agonising suspense during the battle of St. Albans. The news of the fatal blow the royal cause had received, by the slaughter of her

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<sup>1</sup> Newcome's History of the Abbey of St. Albans, p. 357.

<sup>2</sup> Lingard, vol. v. p. 200.

brave friends, and the captivity of the king her husband, plunged her into a sort of stupor of despair, in which she remained for many hours.<sup>1</sup> Her chamberlain, sir John Wenlock, whom she had advanced to great honours, and loaded with benefits, took that opportunity of forsaking her, and strengthening the party of her foe. He was chosen speaker of the Yorkist parliament, which king Henry had been compelled to summon.<sup>2</sup> The king's wound was dangerous, and the alarm and excitement he had undergone brought on a relapse of his malady; so that, when the parliament assembled at Westminster, July 4th, he was declared incapable of attending to public business, and the duke of York was commissioned to attend in his name.<sup>3</sup>

It was in this parliament, made up of her enemies, that queen Margaret was for the first time publicly censured for her interference in affairs of state, it being there resolved, "that the government, as it was managed by the queen, the duke of Somerset, and their friends, had been of late a great oppression and injustice to the people."<sup>4</sup>

The king was petitioned to appoint the duke of York protector or defender of the realm, "because of his indisposition, and *sith* he would not come down to them, that his commons might have knowledge of him." Henry, being then in the duke of York's power, was not permitted to reject this petition, but it was repeated and urged upon him many times, before he would accede to it.<sup>5</sup>

As soon as the duke of York got the executive power of the crown into his hands, he resigned the custody of the king's person to the queen, and enjoined her to withdraw, with him and the infant prince,<sup>6</sup> to Hertford Castle without fail.<sup>7</sup> Margaret was not in a condition to resist this arrangement, but soon after found means to remove to the palace of Greenwich, with these helpless but precious objects of her care, and appeared entirely absorbed in the anxious duties of a wife and mother. "It seemed," says one of her French biographers, "by her conduct at this period, as if she deemed nothing on earth worthy of her attention but the state of her husband's health and the education of her son, who was a child of early promise."<sup>8</sup> Meantime, however, she strengthened the party of the red Rose, by holding frequent secret conferences, in her retreat at Greenwich, with the surviving princes of the Lancastrian family, and the half-brothers of king Henry, the young gallant Tudors, who were nearly allied in blood to herself.<sup>9</sup> She had gathered round her, withal, a band of ardent and courageous young nobles and gentle men, whose fathers were slain at St. Albans, and who were panting to avenge their parents' blood.

<sup>1</sup> Prevost.

<sup>2</sup> Parliamentary History.

<sup>3</sup> Guthrie. Rapin. Parliamentary History.

<sup>4</sup> Rapin.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> The rights of prince Edward were still recognised, and the reversion of the protectorate secured to him when he came of age. It was enacted also that the young prince should be at diet and sojourn in the king's court till the age of fourteen years; allowing yearly to the prince, towards his wardrobe and wages, ten thousand marks, until the age of eight years, and, from the age of eight till fourteen years, twenty thousand marks yearly.—*Rolls of Parliament*.

<sup>7</sup> Paston Papers.

<sup>8</sup> Prevost.

<sup>9</sup> Guthrie.

Having thus prepared herself, Margaret remained no longer passive than the arrival of the eagerly anticipated moment when the abatement of the king's indisposition warranted her in presenting him before his parliament. A great meeting of her adherents was previously convened at Greenwich,<sup>1</sup> unknown to the duke of York, in which the preliminary steps for this design were arranged; and on the 24th of February, 1456, king Henry entered the House of Lords, in the absence of the duke of York and the leading members of his faction, and declared "that being now, by the blessing of God, in good health, he did not think his kingdom was in any need of a protector,<sup>2</sup> and requested permission to resume the reins of empire." The parliament, being taken by surprise at the unexpected appearance of their sovereign among them, and the collected and dignified manner in which he addressed them, immediately acceded to his desire. The same day an order was sent by king Henry to the duke of York, demanding the resignation of his office. York, Salisbury, and Warwick, were fairly checkmated by this bold move of the queen, and retired into the country. Margaret then caused the heir of the late duke of Somerset, Henry Beaufort, to take the office of prime minister, and Henry bestowed the seals on his beloved friend Waynflete, bishop of Winchester. Henry's health being still in a perilous state, queen Margaret took great pains to amuse him, with every thing that was likely to have a soothing influence, and to keep him in a tranquil frame of mind.<sup>3</sup> There is, in Rymer's *Fœdera*, an order in council, stating, "that the presence of minstrels was a great solace to the king in his sick state, and therefore the bailiffs and sheriffs of his counties were required to seek for beautiful boys, who possessed musical powers, to be instructed in the art of minstrelsy and music, for his service in his court, and to receive good wages." Henry was also amused and comforted by receiving daily requests from his nobles, and others of his subjects, for leave to go on pilgrimages to various shrines in foreign parts, to pray for the re-establishment of his health; and, not unfrequently, he was beguiled with hopes that his bankrupt exchequer was about to be replenished with inexhaustible funds, by the discovery of the philosopher's stone, by one or other of the learned alchemists who were constantly at work in the royal laboratory.<sup>4</sup>

The regal authority was, at this period, exercised in his name, by queen Margaret and her council, with great wisdom and ability; yet the impetuosity of her temper betrayed her into the great imprudence of attempting to interfere with the jurisdiction of the Londoners, by sending the dukes of Buckingham and Exeter, with the royal commission, into the city, for the purpose of trying the parties concerned in a riot in which several persons had been slain; but the populace raised a tumult, and would not permit the dukes to hold a court. After several riots,

<sup>1</sup> Speed. Hall.

<sup>2</sup> Public Acts. Rapin.

<sup>3</sup> Guthrie's folio History of England.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. John Mowbray, duke of Norfolk, called "the good duke," actually performed his vow, and offered his petitions at the Holy Sepulchre for the restoration of his sovereign's health.—*Paston Papers*.

<sup>5</sup> Rymer's *Fœdera*.

queen Margaret, not considering the person of the king safe in London, removed him to Shene, where she left him under the care of his brother Jasper, while she visited Chester,<sup>1</sup> and other towns in the midland counties, to ascertain how the country gentry stood affected to the cause of the crown. Having every reason to confide in the loyal feelings of that portion of their subjects, Margaret decided on bringing the king in royal progress through the midland counties, and keeping court for a time at Coventry. Nothing could exceed the enthusiastic welcome with which the king, queen, and infant prince of Wales, were received by the wealthy burgesses of that ancient city. On their arrival, Margaret was complimented with a variety of pageants, in which patriarchs, evangelists, and saints, obligingly united with the pagan heroes of classic lore, in offering their congratulations to her, on having borne an heir to England, and they all finished by tendering their friendly aid against all adversaries.<sup>2</sup>

There are curious original portraits of Henry VI. and Margaret of Anjou, wrought in tapestry, still preserved in St. Mary's Hall at Coventry, probably the work of a contemporary artist in that species of manufacture, which, we need scarcely remind our readers, is not very favourable for the delineation of female beauty, but highly valuable as affording a faithful copy of the costume and general characteristics of the personages represented. Margaret appears engaged in prayer; her figure is whole-length; her hands rest on an open missal, which is before her, on a table covered with blue cloth; her head-dress is a hood richly bordered with pear-pearls, which hang round her face; on the summit of the hood is a crown of fleur-de-lis, which bends to the shape of the hood at the back of the head; behind the hood hangs a veil, figured, and fringed with drops shaped like pears. On the temples, and in front of the hood, are three oval-shaped gems of great size. The queen wears a rich collar necklace, made up of round pearls and pendant pear-pearls; a chain is suspended round her neck. Her dress appears brocaded: it is of a yellow colour, cut square round the bust; the sleeves are straight on the shoulders, but gradually widen into great fulness, which turns up with ermine. This style is called the *rebras* sleeve, and nearly resembles the modes of Anne of Bretagne, queen of Charles VIII. of France, who was almost a contemporary of Margaret. With the exception of the crown, so oddly placed on the top of the hood, the whole costume is similar to the dress of that queen.<sup>3</sup>

The maternal tenderness of the queen, and the courageous manner in which she had upheld the rights of her royal husband, and devoted herself to the care of his health, her brilliant talents, her eloquence, and

<sup>1</sup> Paston Papers.

<sup>2</sup> Sharp's Antiquities of Coventry.

<sup>3</sup> The Coventry tapestry likewise presents a figure of Henry VI. kneeling; cardinal Beaufort kneels behind the king; and there are seventeen of the English nobility standing in attendance on the royal pair. The figures are the size of life. This noble historical relic is thirty feet in length, and ten feet in height. William Staunton, esq., of Longbridge House, near Warwick, has had the figures of Margaret and Henry engraved, and has kindly favoured us with a copy of the print, and with his own description of the present state of the tapestry.

majestic beauty, were at that time calculated to produce a powerful effect on the minds of all whose hearts the rancour of party had not steeled against her influence. The favourable impression made by Margaret in that district was never forgotten; and Coventry, where she held her court, was ever after so devoted to her service, that it went by the name of queen Margaret's *safe harbour*.

York, Salisbury, and Warwick, were summoned to attend the council at Coventry; but these lords, mistrusting the queen and Somerset, retired to three remote stations: York to his demesnes on the marches, where he had the state and power of a sovereign; Salisbury to his castle of Middleham, in Yorkshire; and Warwick to his government of Calais; of which he, unfortunately for the cause of Lancaster, retained possession.<sup>1</sup>

The French and Scotch availed themselves of the internal troubles of the realm to attack England this year; on which the Yorkists took advantage of the aggressions of her countrymen to work upon the strong national prejudices which were more powerfully felt at that era, perhaps, than at any other period, to excite the ill-will of the people against the queen;<sup>2</sup> as if Margaret could have preferred the interests of her aunt's husband to her own, and that of the father of the child whom she loved with such proud and passionate fondness. So alarming, indeed, did the conduct of France appear to Margaret at this crisis, that she was the first to suggest the expediency of a reconciliation between the court and the adverse party of York and Warwick, that the whole strength of the realm might be employed against foreign invaders. York and Warwick, by whom Margaret was equally hated and mistrusted, paid little attention to her pacific overtures; but when king Henry, in the simplicity and sincerity of his heart, wrote with his own hand a pathetic representation of the evils resulting from this protracted strife, and protested, upon the word of a Christian and a king, that no vengeance should be inflicted on any individual for past offences against the crown, they felt it was impossible to doubt the honour and honesty of his intentions.<sup>3</sup>

A general congress or pacification between the belligerent lords was then resolved upon. To the lord-mayor of London, sir Godfrey Boleyn, was assigned the arduous office of guardian of the public tranquillity on this extraordinary occasion; and for this purpose ten thousand of the citizens were armed, and patrolled the streets day and night as a national guard, to prevent the plunder and bloodshed that were only too likely to arise from quarrels between the followers of the hostile peers. On the 15th of January, 1458, the earl of Salisbury, with five hundred men, arrived, and took up his quarters at his own mansion at Cold Harbour. The duke of York, with four hundred, lodged at Baynard's Castle. The earl of Warwick arrived from Calais in February, with a pompous retinue of six hundred men in scarlet coats. The dukes of Somerset and Exeter, with eight hundred followers, lodged without Temple Bar, in and about Holborn, and other places in the suburbs. The earl of Northumberland and his kinsman, lord Egremont, maintained the feudal

<sup>1</sup> Hall. Speed.

<sup>2</sup> Rapin.

<sup>3</sup> Hall. Stow. Holingshead.



state of the Percys,<sup>1</sup> by bringing fifteen hundred followers; being more numerous attended than any of the other adherents of the red Rose.<sup>2</sup>

How such a congress ever came to any thing in the shape of an amicable treaty, must ever remain among the most marvellous of historic records. Two whole months were spent in fierce debates and angry recriminations, before the mediations of the archbishop of Canterbury, and the other prelates, produced the desired effect. The king and queen were easily satisfied, for they required nothing more than a renewal of homage, in which the names of queen Margaret and her son Edward prince of Wales, were to be included; but the lords demanded pecuniary compensation of each other, for the damage they had sustained, not only in the plundering of their respective castles and estates, but for the loss of kinsmen.<sup>3</sup>

The king and queen, who had not considered it prudent to trust their persons before, among the armed negotiators of the peace, made a public entry into London, and took up their abode, March 27, in the bishop's palace, which was a central position. The feast of the Annunciation was appointed as a day of public thanksgiving for this pacification, when the king and queen, wearing their crowns and royal robes, and attended by all the peers and prelates, walked in solemn procession to St. Paul's Cathedral; and, in token of the sincerity of their reconciliation, the leading members of the lately adverse factions walked hand in hand together, being paired according to the degree of deadly animosity that had previously divided them. The duke of Somerset, coupled with the earl of Salisbury, his ancient foe, headed the procession, followed by the duke of Exeter and the earl of Warwick, in unwonted fellowship. Then, behind the king, who walked alone, came the duke of York, leading queen Margaret by the hand, apparently on the most loving terms with each other. The delight of the citizens of London at this auspicious pageant manifested itself, not only in acclamations, bonfires, and other signs and tokens of popular rejoicings, but called forth some of the halting lyrical effusions of their bards, in commemoration.<sup>4</sup>

No sooner was "this dissimulated love-day," as Fabian calls it, over, than York withdrew to the marches, Salisbury to Yorkshire, and Warwick to his government of Calais.<sup>5</sup> He was at that time lord-admiral by

<sup>1</sup> Stow. Hall. Rapin.

<sup>2</sup> Stow. Hall. Holingshed.

<sup>3</sup> The duke of York actually consented to pay the widowed duchess of his great enemy, Edmund duke of Somerset, 5000*l.*, to console her for the loss of her husband slain at St. Albas; this sum to be divided among her younger children. Warwick and Salisbury paid two thousand marks to the younger sons of lord Clifford.

<sup>4</sup> Here is a specimen:—

"Our sovereign lord, God keep alway,  
And the queen and archbishop of Canterbury,  
And other that have laboured to make this love-day—  
O God preserve them, we pray heartily,  
And London for them full diligently:  
Rejoice, England, in concord and unitie."

*Cottonian MSS. Vespasian, b. xvi. p. 111, b*

<sup>5</sup> Rapin. Public Acts.

patent, and thus the whole naval force of England was at the duke of York's command—undoubtedly, a great oversight on the part of the queen.

The animosity between the queen and Warwick was not of a political nature alone, but, having been founded on a personal pique, was marked with all the bitter and vindictive feelings of private hatred. It was possible for Margaret to assume an appearance of regard for York, but she never could mask her antipathy to Warwick. It was, in all probability, from him that the scandalous imputations on her honour had first emanated—an injury no woman can be expected to forgive, much less a queen. Warwick complained of the rigour with which the queen caused an inquiry to be pushed against him, for a recent act of piracy he had committed, by plundering the Lubeck fleet on the high seas. He accused her of insincerity in the recent act of reconciliation, and of having little regard for the glory of the English arms. These expressions, being repeated in the city, caused a seditious tumult against the queen, in which her attorney-general was killed; and the governors of Furnival's, and Clifford's, and Barnard's Inns, with Taylor (the alderman of the ward in which the fray took place), were committed to prison. This was followed by a personal attack on Warwick, by the royal servants, as he was returning from the council at Westminster Palace.<sup>1</sup> Warwick construed this riot into a premeditated plot, devised by the queen for his destruction. Margaret retaliated the charge by accusing him of causing a tumult at the palace; and, according to Fabyan, she actually procured an order in council, for him to be arrested and committed to the Tower. This fracas, whether originating in design or accident, occurred in a fatal hour for the queen, by affording a plausible excuse to the great triumvirs of the adverse party, York, Salisbury, and Warwick, for drawing the sword once more against the house of Lancaster, which was never again sheathed, till it had drunk the life-blood of those nearest and dearest to Margaret, her husband and her son.

King Henry, leaving his queen to struggle with these difficulties, retired to pass that Easter at the abbey of St. Albans. At his departure, having nought else to bestow, he ordered his best robe to be given to the prior. His treasurer heard the command with consternation, well knowing the poverty of the royal wardrobe was such, that Henry had no other garment suitable for state occasions, nor the means of providing one at his need; so, stepping up to the prior, he offered to redeem the

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<sup>1</sup> According to Fabyan, the dispute commenced while Warwick was in the council-chamber, and originated in an assault made by one of the king's servants on a person belonging to his retinue. Stow and Polydore Vergil assert that Warwick's man was the aggressor, who severely wounded the king's servant; whereupon the *black guard* (as the scullions, cooks, and kitchen band, were called), armed with clubs, spits, and cleavers, rushed forth to revenge their comrade. In the midst of this fray, the council broke up, and Warwick, coming forth to take barge, was immediately assailed by the culinary champions of the palace; and so fierce an attack was made upon his person, that it was with difficulty he fought his way to the barge with his retinue, many of whom were severely maimed and wounded.

robe for fifty marks. Henry unwillingly complied with this prudent arrangement, but he charged the prior to follow him to London for the money, which he made the reluctant treasurer disburse in his presence. The following June, 1459, the court departed from the metropolis. Queen Margaret took the king in progress through the counties of Warwick, Stafford, and Cheshire, under the pretence of benefiting his health by change of air and sylvan sports. She was accompanied by her son, the young prince of Wales, then in his sixth year, a child of singular beauty and promise, for whom she engaged the favour of all the nobles and gentlemen, in those loyal counties, by causing him to distribute little silver swans, as his badge, wherever he came, and to all who pressed to look upon him. Margaret displayed peculiar tact in adopting, for her boy, the well-remembered device which had distinguished his renowned ancestor, Edward III., whose name he bore. So well were her impassioned pleadings in his behalf seconded by the loveliness and winning behaviour of the princely child, that ten thousand men wore his livery at the battle of Blore-heath.

Queen Margaret witnessed this fierce conflict from the tower of Mucleston Church, a small village, seated on a rising ground in Staffordshire. King Henry was then at Coleshill, in Warwickshire; and Margaret, fearing for his safety, sent lord Audley to intercept the earl of Salisbury, then on his march from Middleham Castle, with a reinforcement of four or five thousand Yorkists. Margaret sternly bade Audley bring Salisbury before her, dead or alive. Audley posted himself on Blore-heath, at the head of ten thousand Cheshiremen, distinguished by the red rosette of Lancaster, and their leaders by the silver swans worn on their breasts, in honour of Edward, prince of Wales. Nearly three thousand of the flower of Cheshire, cavaliers and yeomen, perished with Audley, their leader. When Margaret, from Mucleston Tower, beheld the fall of Audley's banner, she fled to Eccleshall Castle.<sup>1</sup> King Henry, who was dangerously ill at Coleshill, lay stretched on a pallet during the battle of Blore-heath, and the only token of consciousness he gave was that, when his people were removing him, he asked in a feeble voice "who had got the day?"

Salisbury, through this victory, was enabled to form a junction with the duke of York's army, and it was expected that the duke, who now boldly asserted his title to the crown, would speedily attain the object to which all his actions, for the last twelve years, had tended.

The energies of queen Margaret's mind increased, with the perils and difficulties with which the cause of her royal husband was beset. She had, for the first time in her life, looked upon a battle, and though it was the disastrous defeat of Blore-heath, far from being dismayed, or regarding it as the death-blow to the hopes of Lancaster, it appears to have had the effect of rousing a dormant faculty within her soul — the courage and enterprise of a military leader. Hitherto she had fought her enemies from the cabinet; now she had caught the fierce excitement of her combative nobles, and kindled with the desire of asserting the right.

<sup>1</sup> Pennant.

of her husband and her son in battle-fields. It must be remembered that this martial fever was one of the epidemics of the times in which Margaret of Anjou lived; that the warlike blood of Charlemagne was thrilling in her veins; and, moreover, that she was the country-woman, and was born the contemporary, of Joan of Arc, who had proved herself a more successful general against the English than all the princes and chivalry of France.

Having fallen back to Coventry, she there made a general rally of the friends of Lancaster, and succeeded in getting together an efficient army once more; and before the end of October, finding the king sufficiently recovered to take the field in person, she prevailed with him to march to Ludlow, where the duke of York and his adherents were assembled in warlike array.

So greatly had the popularity of king Henry increased, in consequence of his appearance in the provinces, that the duke of York, to his astonishment and confusion, found his own vassals so little disposed to fight against the anointed sovereign, that he thought proper to circulate a report of the king's death, and caused a solemn mass for the repose of his soul to be sung in his camp at Ludford,—supposing that he might by this *ruse* deprive his adversaries of the sacred shield of Henry's name. But the sturdy marchers showed not a whit more inclination to attack the queen, or impugn the title of the infant son of Henry, than they had done to draw the sword against himself. Margaret, having good information of what was passing in the enemy's camp, caused a pardon to be proclaimed in the king's name to all who would return to their allegiance. This was, in the first instance, treated with contempt by the Yorkist leaders, who replied, "they knew better than to rely on such a staff of reed, or buckler of glass, as the promises of the king under his present guidance."<sup>1</sup>

Urged by his energetic consort, Henry then advanced within a mile of Ludlow Castle. The duke of York, relying on Henry's conscientious antipathy to fighting, endeavoured to play over the same game he had, under similar circumstances, done at Burnt-heath, by addressing a letter to him, full of protestations of his loyal and good intentions, and praying his sovereign to redress the grievances of the people, by eschewing his evil counsellors. But Henry, while under the immediate influence of Margaret's master mind, showed he was not now to be trifled with, and, therefore, answered the letter of the insurgents by marching up to the gates of Ludlow, where the royal pardon was again proclaimed. This being followed by the submission or desertion of many of the Yorkist soldiers, the duke, with his second son, Edmund earl of Rutland, fled to Ireland; and the earls of Salisbury and Warwick, with the heir of York, Edward earl of March, sailed for Calais, leaving the duchess of York to defend the castle as she could. She and her two youngest sons were made prisoners by the king, who sacked and plundered the town and castle of Ludlow, to the bare walls.<sup>2</sup> Such was the result of the

<sup>1</sup> Speed.

<sup>2</sup> Guthrie. Speed.

first campaign that was shared by the queen, and, if we are to credit the assertions of all historians, directed by her counsels.

This signal victory having been happily achieved without bloodshed, Margaret returned in triumph, with her royal spouse, to her trusty friends at Coventry, where Henry commanded a parliament to meet, November 20th. King Henry appears to have been more offended at the mass that was said for his soul, in the camp of his enemies, than at any of their less innocent acts of treason. It is mentioned with peculiar acrimony, in the bill of attainder passed against York and his party, by this parliament, as the very climax of their villainies.

For the security of Margaret and the young prince, a new and solemn oath of allegiance was framed and sworn to, by the peers and prelates of this parliament, in which each liegeman, after engaging to do his true devoir to king Henry, added these words: "Also to the weal, surety, and preserving of the person of the most high and benign princess Margaret, the queen, my sovereign lady, and of her most high and noble estate, she, being your wife, and also to the weal, surety, and honour of the person of the right high and mighty prince Edward, your first-begotten son."<sup>1</sup> The king, by the authority of the same parliament, granted to queen Margaret the manor of Cosham, with the appurtenances, in Wilts, and 20*l.* yearly out of the aulnage of cloth in London, in exchange for the manor of Havering Bower, which had been settled on her.<sup>2</sup>

The triumph of the royal cause was brief; Calais and the naval power of England were at the command of Margaret's determined adversary, Warwick; and from that quarter the portentous storm-clouds began once more to threaten.<sup>3</sup>

Margaret was, at this period, personally engaged in courting popularity among the aristocracy of Norfolk. Dame Margaret Paston describes some of her proceedings, while in Norfolk, in a familiar epistle to her husband, which is too rich a specimen of the manners of the times, and of the arts used by the queen to ingratiate herself individually with the ladies of Norfolk, to be omitted.

#### LETTER FROM MARGARET PASTON.

"As for tidings, the queen came into this town on Tuesday last, past afternoon, and abode there till it was Thursday three o'clock; and she sent after my cousin Elizabeth Clere, by Sharinham, to come to her, and she durst not disobey her commandment, and came to her; and when she came in the queen's presence, the queen made right much of her, and desired her to have a husband, the which ye shall know of hereafter; but, as for that, he is never the nearer than before. The queen was right well pleased with her answer, and reported her of the best wise, and saith, 'by her troth she saw no *jantylwoman*, since she came into Norfolk, that she liked better than she doth her.' When the queen was here, I borrowed my cousin Elizabeth Clere's device (necklace), for I durst not for shame go with my beads amongst so many fresh gentlewomen (fashionably dressed ladies) as here were at that time.

"Norwich, Friday before St. George."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Parliamentary History.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Lingard, vol. v. ch. xi. p. 213.

<sup>4</sup> Fen dates this letter, from conjecture, in 1452, but adds, "That Margaret of

How vigilant and unremitting a scrutiny Margaret, by some indirect means, kept upon the conduct of the nobility and gentry at this period, and how minute and particular was the information she contrived to obtain of all their actions, and even of the proceedings of their servants, may be gathered from the following extract from a contemporary letter, addressed to sir John Paston :—

"I beseech you to remember that I have aforetime been accused unto the king's highness and the queen's for owing my poor good-will and service unto my lord of York and others, &c., whereof I suppose that sir Thomas Bingham is remembered, that I brought him once from my lady (duchess of Norfolk) a purse and five marks (3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) therein; and to sir Philip Wentworth another, and an hundred shillings therein, for their good-will and advice therein to my lady, and all of us that were appealed for that case. Notwithstanding the king wrote to my lord,<sup>1</sup> by the means of the duke of Somerset, 'that we should be avoided from him,' and within this two years we were, in like wise, laboured against to the queen, so that she wrote to my lord to avoid us, saying, 'that the king and she could, nor might, in no ways, be assured of him and my lady, as long as we were about him;' and much other things, as may be sufficiently proved by the queen's writing, under her own signet and sign manual, which I showed to the lord of Canterbury and other lords."<sup>2</sup>

Meantime, the band of veterans which Warwick had brought from Calais had swelled into a puissance, whose numbers have been variously reported by historians, from twenty-five thousand to forty thousand men. With this force he and his military *élite*, Edward, earl of March, triumphantly entered London, July 2d, 1460, the citizens throwing open their gates for their admittance. On the 9th of the same month, they measured swords with the royal army at Northampton.

So ardently devoted to her service did queen Margaret find the chivalry, whom she had arrayed beneath the banner of the red Rose, to defend the rights of her husband and her son, that, imagining herself secure of victory, she induced the king to quit the town of Coventry,

Anjou, alarmed at the approach of Edward, earl of March, toward London with a great power, endeavoured to make what friends she could, and, amongst other places, on her journeys for that purpose, visited Norwich, Jasper, and Edmund, the king's brothers, attending her. Her familiarity and obliging address pleased the Norfolk gentry." Now, as Edward, earl of March, was a child in 1452, it must have been when he appeared in hostile array against king Henry, June 1460, just before the battle of Northampton, that Margaret was seeking to strengthen her husband's cause in Norfolk.—Paston Papers, vol. i. p. 377.

<sup>1</sup> John Mowbray, duke of Norfolk, in whose household the writer, R. Southwell, had an appointment.

<sup>2</sup> The letter addressed by queen Margaret to the duchess of Norfolk on this occasion, has been vainly sought for by the rev. Mr. Tierney, the historian of Arundel, among the archives of the Howard family. Some strange fatality, indeed, appears to have attended the correspondence of this remarkable woman, since, of the many private letters written by her, not even a copy of one appears to have been preserved. Sir Henry Ellis is of opinion that none of Margaret's letters are in existence, and certainly no success has at present attended the friendly efforts of M. Michelet, the president of the Historical Society at Paris, or any other of the learned antiquaries of the age, who have generously endeavoured to facilitate our object, by searching the royal archives at Paris, and the manuscript collections of Rouen and Lorraine, for documents of the kind.

and, crossing the river Nene, to encamp with his army in the plain between Harsington and Sandiford.<sup>1</sup>

The fiery heir of York then advanced his father's banner, and attacked the host of Lancaster, at seven in the morning, with one of his tremendous charges. The battle lasted but two hours, and was decided by the treachery of lord Grey de Ruthyn, who admitted the Yorkists into the heart of the royal camp. "Ten thousand tall Englishmen," says Hall, "were slain or drowned in attempting to repass the river, and king Henry himself, left all lonely and disconsolate, was taken prisoner."

The dukes of Somerset and Buckingham were the leaders of the royal army. Buckingham was slain in the battle, where also fell another staunch friend of Margaret and the cause of the red Rose, John Talbot, earl of Shrewsbury, a son not unworthy of his renowned sire—"Talbot, our good dogge," as he was called in the quaint, but significant parlance of his party. Somerset escaped to fulfil a darker destiny.

Queen Margaret was not herself in the battle, but, with her boy, the infant hope of Lancaster, was posted at a short distance from the scene of action, on a spot whence she could command a prospect of the field, and communicate with her generals. When, however, she witnessed the treachery of lord Grey, and the headlong rush of her disordered troops, to repass the river they had crossed that morning so full of hope and ardour, the pride and courage of the heroine yielded to maternal terror; and, forgetful of every other consideration but the preservation of her boy, she fled precipitately, with him and a few faithful followers, towards the bishopric of Durham. But Durham was no place of refuge for the queen, who had previously incurred the ill-will of the citizens, by some arbitrary measure or imprudent burst of temper.

William of Worcester relates, that queen Margaret and the prince of Wales were actually captured, while flying from Eggeshall to Chester, by John Cleger, one of lord Stanley's servants, and spoiled of all her jewels; but while they were rifling her baggage, of which her attendants had charge, she seized an opportunity of escaping with the prince. On the road she was joined by the duke of Somerset, and, after a thousand perils, succeeded in reaching Harlech Castle, an almost impregnable fortress in North Wales, where she was honourably received, and manfully protected, by Dafyd ap Jevan ap Einion, a Welsh chieftain, who, in stature and courage resembled one of the doughty Cambrian giants of metrical romance.<sup>2</sup>

In this rocky fastness, which appeared as if formed by nature for the shelter of the royal fugitives, they remained safe from the vindictive pursuit of their foes, while the unfortunate king was conducted to London, by those whom the fortunes of war had rendered the arbiters of his fate. He was treated with external marks of respect by the victors, but was compelled by them to summon a parliament, for the purpose of sanctioning their proceedings, and reprobating those of his faithful friends. During the interval before it met at Westminster, and while all parties

<sup>1</sup> Hall. Lingard.

<sup>2</sup> Notes to the Warkworth Chronicle, by J. O. Halliwell, esq. Pennant.

remained in uncertainty as to what had become of the queen and the prince of Wales, Henry was removed for a short time to Eltham, and permitted to recreate himself with hunting and field-sports, in which, notwithstanding his mild and studious character, Henry VI. appears to have taken much pleasure. He was under the charge of the earl of March, who kept a watch over him.<sup>1</sup>

The duke of York, having received the news of the signal triumph of his party, entered London, October 10th, at the head of a retinue of five hundred horsemen, with a sword of state borne before him; and, riding straight to Westminster, he passed through the hall into the House of Lords, advanced to the regal canopy, and laid his hand upon the throne, with a gesture and look implying that he only waited for an invitation to take possession of it. But a dead silence prevailed, even among his own partisans, which was at length broken by the archbishop of Canterbury asking him, "If he would be pleased to visit the king?"<sup>2</sup> who was in the queen's suite of apartments, those belonging to the sovereign having been appropriated to the duke of York's use.<sup>3</sup> "I know of no one in this realm who ought not rather to visit me," was the haughty rejoinder of the duke. With these words he angrily left the house.

The peers by whom these rival claims were to be decided had, to a man, sworn their liegemen's oaths to king Henry, and to him they referred the question, as to which had the legal claim to the crown, himself, or his cousin Richard, duke of York. Henry, though a captive in the power of his rival, replied in these words:—"My father was king; his father was also king; I have worn the crown forty years, from my cradle; you have all sworn fealty to me as your sovereign, and your fathers have done the like to my father and grandfather. How, then, can my right be disputed?"<sup>4</sup>

The king, notwithstanding, agreed, that if he were permitted to wear the crown during his life, the duke of York or his heirs should succeed to the royal dignity at his decease. Henry was next compelled, by those who had the custody of his person, to give the regal sanction to a peremptory mandate, for the return of his consort and son to the metropolis, attaching no milder term than that of high treason to a wilful disobedience of this injunction.

Margaret was a fugitive, without an army, without allies, kindred, or money, when she received this summons, together with the intelligence, that the rights of her boy had been passively surrendered, by his unfortunate sire, to the hostile princes of the line of York. Tidings that would have overwhelmed any other female with despair had the effect of rousing all the energies of her nature into that resistless determination of purpose, which for a time redeemed the cause of Lancaster from ruin.

The king of Scotland was the son of a Lancastrian princess; his sister Margaret, the late dauphiness of France, had been closely connected

<sup>1</sup> Paston Papers.

<sup>2</sup> Lingard.

<sup>3</sup> Lingard. Hall. Rapin.

<sup>4</sup> Blackman, p. 303. Lingard. Hall.



with Margaret of Anjou, both by marriage and friendship; and she resolved on trying the efficacy of a personal application to that monarch, for assistance in this emergency. Having caused a report to be circulated, that she was raising forces in France, Margaret quitted her rocky eyry among the wilds of Snowdon, where her beauty, her courage, and the touching circumstances under which she appeared, had created among her loyal Welsh adherents an interest, not unlike that which is occasionally felt, for the distressed queens of tragedy and romance. The popular Welsh song, "*Furwel iti Peggy ban*,"<sup>1</sup> is said to have been the effusion of the bards of that district, on the occasion of her departure.

The communication between Wales and Scotland was facilitated for Margaret, by the proximity of Harlech Castle to the Menai, on which it is supposed she embarked, with her son and a few trusty followers.<sup>2</sup> Her negotiations at the court of Scotland were prosperous, and her measures so vigorous, that, in less than eight days after she had received the order, in king Henry's name, for her immediate return to London, she was at the head of an army, had crossed the Scottish border, unfurled the banner of the red Rose, and, strengthened by all the chivalry of Northumberland, Cumberland, Lancashire, and Westmoreland, presented herself at the gates of York, before the leaders of the white Rose party were fully aware that she was in England.

The duke of York, who had by no means anticipated this prompt and bold response to the proclamation he had enforced his royal captive to send to the fugitive queen, left London with the earl of Salisbury, at the head of such forces as could be hastily collected, to check the fierce career of the lioness whom they had rashly roused from her slumberous stupor of despair.

On Christmas-eve, the duke reached his strong castle of Sandal, where, with five thousand men, he determined to await the arrival of his son Edward, who was raising the border forces. Before this could be effected, queen Margaret advanced to Wakefield, and, appearing under the walls of Sandal Castle, defied the duke to meet her in the field day after day, and used so many provoking taunts on "his want of courage in suffering himself to be tamely braved by a woman,"<sup>3</sup> that York, who certainly had had little reason to form a very lofty idea of Margaret's skill as a military leader, determined to come forth and do battle with her.

Sir Davy Hall, his old servant, represented to him "that the queen was at the head of eighteen thousand men, at the lowest computation, and advised him to keep within his castle, and defend it till the arrival of his son with the border forces. The duke disdaining this prudent counsel, indignantly replied—"Ah! Davy, Davy, hast thou loved me so long, and wouldest thou have me dishonoured? Thou never sawest me keep fortress when I was regent in Normandy, where the dauphin himself, with his puissance, came to besiege me, but like a man, and not like a bird in a cage, I issued and fought with mine enemies,—to their

<sup>1</sup> Notes to the Warkworth Chronicle, by J. O. Halliwell, esq.

<sup>2</sup> Pennant.

<sup>3</sup> Hall, p. 250.

loss ever, I thank God! and if I have not kept myself within walls for fear of a great and strong prince, nor hid my face from any man living, wouldest thou that I, for dread of a scolding woman, whose only weapons are her tongue and her nails, should incarcerate myself, and shut my gates? Then all men might of me wonder, and report to my dishonour, that a woman hath made me a dastard, whom no man could ever yet prove a coward."<sup>1</sup> The duke concluded by declaring his intention to advance his banner in the name of God and St. George; then with his brother-in-law, the earl of Salisbury, he issued from his strong hold, and set his battle in array; in the hope of driving his female adversary from the field.<sup>2</sup>

Margaret had drawn up her puissance in three bodies. The central force was commanded by Somerset, under her directions, it is said: but it is by no means certain that she played the Amazon, by fighting in person on this, or any other occasion. The other two squadrons were ambushed to the right and left, under the orders of the earl of Wiltshire and lord Clifford; and as soon as York had entered the plain, and was engaged by the van-guard, they closed him in on either side, "like," says Hall, "a fish in a net, or a deer in a buck-stall, so that in less than half-an-hour he, manfully fighting, was slain, and his army discomfited." Two thousand of the Yorkists lay dead on the field, and the ruthless Clifford, on his return from the pursuit, in which he had slain the young earl of Rutland, in cold blood, on Wakefield Bridge, severed the head of the duke of York from his lifeless body, crowned it with paper, and presented it to queen Margaret on the point of a lance, with these words:—"Madame, your war is done; here is your king's ransom."<sup>3</sup>

The Lancastrian peers who surrounded the queen raised a burst of acclamation, not unmixed with laughter, as they directed the attention of their royal mistress to the ghastly witness of their triumph. Margaret at first shuddered, turned pale, and averted her eyes, as if affrighted by the horrid spectacle thus unexpectedly offered to her gaze; but the instinctive emotions of woman's nature were quickly superseded by feelings of vindictive pleasure; and when she was urged to look again upon "this king without a kingdom," who had endeavoured to wrest the crown of England from her husband and her son, she looked and laughed—laughed long and violent—and then commanded the head of her fallen foe to be placed over the gates of York.<sup>4</sup> She likewise ordered the earl of Salisbury, who was among the prisoners, to be led to the scaffold the following day, and caused his head to be placed by that of his friend and brother-in-law, the duke of York.<sup>5</sup> In the blindness of her presumption, when issuing these orders, she bade the ministers of her vengeance "take care that room were left between the heads of York and Salisbury for those of the earls of March and Warwick, which she intended should soon keep them company."

<sup>1</sup> Hall's Chronicle; Sir Davy Hall was the historian's grandfather.

<sup>2</sup> Hall.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Prevost.

<sup>5</sup> Hall. Lingard. Monstrelet says that Salisbury was executed by the common people, who were excited to break into his prison, and put him to death irregularly; a subterfuge often occurring in this century.

The demons of war were now let loose in all their destroying fury, and the leaders of the rival parties emulated each other in deeds of blood and horror. Edward earl of March won a battle at Mortimer's Cross, February 1st, which was followed by a sanguinary execution, in reprisal for his brother's murder, and the outrage offered to his father's remains.

Margaret, however, pushed on, with resistless impetuosity, to the metropolis, with the intention of rescuing her captive lord from the thralldom in which he had been held, ever since the battle of Northampton. It must have been at this time she published two remarkable manifestoes, addressed to the English people.

"By the Queen.

"Right trusty and well beloved, we greet you heartily well.

"And whereas the late duke of N——<sup>1</sup> (York), of extreme malice, long hid under colour, imagining by many ways the destruction of my lord's good grace (Henry VI.), whom God of his mercy ever preserve, hath now late, upon an untrue pretence, feigned a title to my lord's crown and royal estate (contrary to his allegiance, and divers solemn oaths of his own), and fully purposed to have deposed him of his regality, *we* had been (but for) the said unchangeable and true dispositions of you and other his true liegemen. For the which your worshipful dispositions we thank you as heartily as we can. And howbeit the said untrue, *unsad* (unsteady), and unadvised person, of very pure malice disposed to continue in his *cruelness*, to the utter undoing (if he might) of us and of our said lord's son and ours, the prince (which, of God's mercy, he shall not have the power to perform, by the help of you and all other my lord's faithful disposed subjects), hath thrown among you, as we be certainly informed, divers untrue and feigned matters and surmises; and in especial that we and my lord's said son and ours should newly draw towards you with an uncivil power of strangers, disposed to rob and despoil you of your goods and *havours*; we will that ye shall know for certain that at such time as we or our said son shall be disposed to see my lord (Henry VI.), as our duty is, ye, nor none of ye, shall be robbed, despoiled, or wronged by any person or any other sent in our name. Praying you in our most hearty way that in all earthly thing ye will diligently *intend* (attend) to the safety of my lord's royal person, so that, through the malice of his said enemy, he be no more troubled, vexed, and jeopardd; and in so doing, we shall be to you, such lady, as of reason ye shall be largely content.

"Given under our signet."

Margaret, in this proclamation, endeavoured at the same time to counteract the report, that her northern allies had received from her the promise of pillaging all England south of the Trent, to shield the person of her lord from injury. She added a second manifesto, in the name of her young son, much to the same purpose, but meant more particularly to re-assure the city of London; for young Edward is made to assert how improbable it was "that he, descended of the blood-royal, and inheriting the pre-eminence of the realm, should intend the destruction of that city which is our lord's (king Henry's) greatest treasure." The address concludes with most earnest entreaties for all men to have such

<sup>1</sup> Harleian, 543, 48 V. 14. This manifesto, in which the queen's personal feelings are much mingled, is a rough draft in the original, with the letter N for *nomen*, where York is meant. We owe these curious documents to the research of the rev. Mr. Tomlinson.

care of king Henry's royal person, "that by the malice of my said traitor (York) he may take no hurt."

While Margaret was thus providing as far as possible for the safety of her consort, Warwick, leading his royal prisoner in his train, intercepted her army at the head of his forces. The earl took possession of St. Albans, and filled the streets with archers to oppose her passage. When the queen attempted to pass through the town, she was driven back by a storm of arrows from the market-place; but, with dauntless intrepidity, she forced her way through a lane into St. Peter's Street, and drove Warwick's archers back upon the vanguard of his army, which was encamped on Barnet Heath. Here a furious conflict took place almost hand to hand, neither party giving quarter.

Warwick's army was chiefly composed of Londoners, who proved no match for the stout northern men whom Margaret kept pouring upon them. Lovelace, who commanded a large body of the city bands, having a secret understanding with the queen, kept aloof till the fortunes of the day were decided in her favour. On the approach of night, the Yorkists dispersed and fled, leaving their royal prisoner, king Henry, nearly alone in a tent, with lord Montague, his chamberlain, and two or three attendants. His life was in absolute peril, from the fierce northern muster arrayed by the queen, under the banner of the red Rose; for they were unacquainted with his person, and equally athirst for plunder and for blood.

The queen was not herself aware of the proximity of her captive lord to the scene of her triumph, till his faithful servant, Howe, ran to lord Clifford's quarters, to announce the fact. Attended by Clifford, she flew to greet him, and they embraced with the most passionate tokens of joy.<sup>1</sup>

Margaret exultingly presented the young prince of Wales, who had been her companion during the perils of that stormy day, to his enfranchised sire and sovereign, and requested Henry to bestow knighthood on the gallant child, and thirty more of their adherents, who had particularly distinguished themselves in the fight.

The victorious queen, with the king, the prince of Wales, and the northern lords, went immediately to return thanks to God in the abbey-church of St. Albans, for the deliverance of the king. They were received by the abbot and monks, with hymns of triumph, at the church-door. After this solemn office was performed, the king and queen were conducted to their apartments in the abbey, where they took up their abode.<sup>2</sup>

It is deeply to be regretted that the queen sullied this victory by the execution of the lord Bonville and sir Thomas Kyriel. Some historians have said they were beheaded in the presence of herself and the young prince her son, in defiance of king Henry's promise, that their lives should be spared, if they remained in the tent with him, to assist in protecting him during the rout at St. Albans.

Unfortunately for Margaret, the provocations she had received were

<sup>1</sup> Carte. Lingard. Prevost.

<sup>2</sup> Hollingshed.

of a nature calculated to irritate her no less as a woman than as a queen. The imputations which had been cast, by party insinuations, on the legitimacy of her son, had naturally kindled feelings of the bitterest indignation in her heart; and the attempt to exclude him from the succession, in favour of the hated line of York, acting upon her passionate maternal love and pride, converted all the better feelings of her nature into fierce and terrific impulses, till at length the graceful attributes of mind and manners by which the queen—the beauty, and the patroness of learning—had been distinguished, were forgotten in the ferocity of the amazon and the avenger.

The parties of the rival Roses were so nicely balanced, in point of physical force, at this period, that one false step on either side was sure to prove fatal to the cause of the person by whom it might be taken. That person was queen Margaret; flushed with her recent triumphs, and cherishing a wrathful remembrance of the disaffection of the Londoners, she sent a haughty demand of provisions for her army to the civic authorities. The lord-mayor was embarrassed by this requisition; for, though he was himself faithfully attached to the cause of Lancaster, his fellow-citizens were greatly opposed to it. However, he exerted his authority to procure several cart-loads of salt fish, bread, and such Lenten fare, for the use of the queen's army; but the populace, encouraged by the news that the earl of Warwick had formed a junction with the army of the victorious heir of York, and that they were in full march to the metropolis, stopped the carts at Cripplegate. Margaret was so greatly exasperated, when she learned this, that she gave permission to her fierce northern auxiliaries to plunder the country, up to the very gates of London.<sup>1</sup> The lord-mayor and recorder, greatly alarmed, sought, and (through the influence of the duchess of Bedford, lady Scales, and Elizabeth Woodville) succeeded in obtaining, an audience with the queen at Barnet, for the purpose of dissuading her from her impolitic revenge. Margaret would only agree to stop the ravages of her troops on condition of being admitted with her army into the city. The lord-mayor represented the impossibility of complying with her wish, as he was almost her only adherent in London.

Before the queen and the lord-mayor had ended their debate, the northern troops, whom Margaret had lured across the Trent with promises of plundering the rich southern counties, had already commenced their depredations in the town of St. Albans; and king Henry broke up the conference between the queen, her ladies, and the lord-mayor, by imploring her assistance in preserving the beautiful abbey of St. Albans from fire and spoil.<sup>2</sup>

The danger that threatened their lives and properties, and the disgust created by the rash and vindictive conduct of the queen, decided all London and its vicinity to raise the white Rose banner, on the approach of the heir of York, with Warwick, at the head of forty thousand men; and the firm refusal of the Londoners to admit the queen, and her ill-disciplined and lawless troops, within their walls, compelled Margaret,

<sup>1</sup> Hall. Carte.

<sup>2</sup> Wethampstede.

with her forces, to fall back towards the northern counties. She carried with her king Henry, and their son, the prince of Wales. The next day Edward entered London in triumph; he was received by the citizens as their deliverer; and on the 4th of March he was proclaimed king, with universal acclamations, by the style and title of Edward IV.<sup>1</sup>

It is worthy of notice, that in three great political struggles, the suffrages of the city of London turned the balance. The empress Mand, Margaret of Anjou, and Charles I. lost all, with the good-will of the Londoners.

The recognition of Edward IV. by the Londoners, though generally considered as the death-blow to the cause of Lancaster, only served to rouse the queen to greater energy of action. She was the heroine of the northern aristocracy and the midland counties, who, though they had suffered so severely for their devotion to her cause, were still ready to rally, at her need, round the banner of the red Rose. An army of sixty thousand men was, in the course of a few days, at her command; but her generals, Somerset and Clifford, prevailed on Margaret to remain with the king and the young prince of Wales, at York, while they engaged the rival sovereign of England.<sup>2</sup>

Edward, with nearly equal forces, advanced in concert with the earl of Warwick, to Ferrybridge, where, on the 28th of March, Clifford and his men, early in the morning, won the bridge, and surprised the advanced guard of the Yorkists. The able generalship and hot valour of king Edward retrieved the fortunes of the fight, and when darkness parted the combatants he remained in possession of the battle-field. The contest was renewed in the fields between Towton and Saxton, with redoubled fury, at nine the following morning, being Palm Sunday, "which," says the chronicler, "was celebrated that day with lances instead of palms." A heavy snow-storm, drifting full in the faces of the Lancastrian party, blinded their archers, who shot uncertainly, while those of York with fatal effect discharged their flight-arrows, and then, advancing a few paces, shot a second shower among the chivalry of the red Rose.<sup>3</sup>

The result of this dreadful battle, where the strength and flower of the Lancastrians perished, is best described in the immortal verse of laureate Southey:—

<p>"Witness Aire's unhappy water, Where the ruthless Clifford fell; And where Wharfe ran red with slaughter On the day of Towcester's field, Gathering in its guilty flood</p>	<p>The carnage and the ill-spilt blood That forty thousand lives could yield. Cressy was to this but sport, Poitiers but a pageant vain, And the work of Agincourt Only like a tournament."</p>
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Margaret fled, with her consort and her son, to Newcastle, and from thence to Alnwick Castle. A mournful welcome awaited her there, for its gallant lord had fought and fallen in her cause at Towton. It is recorded by Leland, that, during her temporary sojourn in this neighbourhood, queen Margaret, with her own hand, shot a buck, with a broad

<sup>1</sup> Lingard. Hall. Carte.

<sup>2</sup> Hall. Lingard.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



arrow, in Alnwick Park. This anecdote implies that the royal fugitives enjoyed the relaxation of sylvan sports, while partaking of the generous hospitality of the loyal and courageous house of Percy, on their disastrous retreat to the Scottish border. It is, moreover, the only proof of Margaret's personal prowess in the use of deadly weapons, and shows that she possessed strength of arm, and no inconsiderable skill in handling the long-bow. She had been always accustomed to accompany the king in hunting, hawking, and other field-sports, in which Henry VI. so much delighted, and in which he was encouraged by her, as beneficial to his peculiar constitution.

From Alnwick, Margaret proceeded to Berwick, with her husband, her son, and a few faithful ladies and followers, who attended the perilous wanderings of the Lancastrian court. While there, the desperation of her husband's cause betrayed the distressed queen into the unpopular measure of surrendering Berwick to the Scotch.<sup>1</sup>

She also negotiated a treaty of marriage between the young prince of Wales, then in his eighth year, and the lady Margaret of Scotland, sister to the young king James III., having won the friendship of the queen-regent, Mary of Gueldres, and purchased the good offices of the powerful earl of Angus, by the promise of an English dukedom.<sup>2</sup> Warwick, with shrewd policy, endeavoured to traverse this negotiation, by proffering to the queen-mother of Scotland the hand and crown of the handsome bachelor sovereign, Edward of York, for herself, in lieu of a marriage between her little daughter and the young heir of Lancaster. But Margaret's personal influence prevailed over all opposing interests, and the prince of Wales became the betrothed spouse of the princess of Scotland.<sup>3</sup> After all these efforts of Margaret, the marriage was finally broken by the interference of Philip duke of Burgundy,<sup>4</sup> who forbade his niece, Mary of Gueldres, queen-regent of Scotland, to ally herself with his family foe, Margaret of Anjou: a proceeding which threw Margaret into transports of rage, and caused her to utter some vain threats against the person of duke Philip.

While Margaret of Anjou, with the formidable activity of a chess-queen, was attempting, from her safe refuge in Scotland, to check her adversary's game, she was, with the king her husband and her little son, proscribed and attainted by the parliament of the rival sovereign of England, and it was forbidden to all their former subjects to hold any sort of communication with them, on pain of death.<sup>5</sup> The whole of England was now subjected to the authority of Edward IV.; yet there was still an undying interest pervading the great body of the people in favour of the blameless monarch to whom their oaths of allegiance had been, in the first instance, plighted. Poetry, that powerful pleader to the sympathies of generous natures in behalf of fallen princes, failed not

<sup>1</sup> Lingard, vol. v. p. 235. Rapin.

<sup>2</sup> Worcester, p. 493. Rymet, vol. ix. p. 438. Lingard.

<sup>3</sup> Hall.

<sup>4</sup> Monstrelet. See the commencement of this biography, where the enmity of the house of Burgundy to the family of Anjou is explained.

<sup>5</sup> Rolls of Parliament. Rymer's *Fœdera*.

to take the holy Henry for its theme. The following lines, from the contemporary verses of John Awdlay, the blind poet, have some rugged pathos, and afford a specimen of the minstrelsy of the period :—

<p>“ I pray you, sirs, of your gentry, Sing this carol reverently, For it is made of king Henry; Great need for him we have to pray.</p>	<p>If he fare well, well shall we be, Or else we may lament full sorely; For him shall weep full many an eye. Thus prophesies the blind Awdlay.”<sup>1</sup></p>
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And many were the faithful hearts ready to sacrifice fortune and life at the call of the royal heroine of the red Rose, who, at the age of thirty-two, was still in the meridian splendour of her beauty, and the full power of her genius.

The devoted nature of the attachment Margaret excited among the Lancastrian chiefs, may be gathered from the following letter from two of her adherents, whom she had sent, with the duke of Somerset, on a private mission to her royal kinsman and friend, Charles VII. These letters, which were intended to break to the luckless queen the calamitous tidings of that monarch's death, were addressed to Margaret, in Scotland, but were intercepted at sea.

“ Madam,—Please your good grace, we have since your coming hither written to your highness thrice, one by the carvel, in which we came, the other two from Dieppe. But, madam, it was all one thing in substance, putting you in knowledge of your uncle's death (Charles VII.), whom God assoil, and how we stood arrested, and do yet. But on Tuesday next we shall up to the king (Louis XI.), your cousin-german. His *commissaires*, at the first of our tarrying, took all our letters and writings, and bare them up to the king, leaving my lord of Somerset in keeping (under arrest) at the castle of Arques, and my fellow Whyttingham and me (for we had safe conduct) in the town of Dieppe, where we are yet.

“ Madam, fear not, but be of good comfort, and beware ye venture not your person, ne my lord the prince, by sea, till ye have other word from us, unless your person cannot be sure where ye are, and extreme necessity drive ye thence. And for God's sake let the king's highness be advised of the same, for, as we are informed, the earl of March (Edward IV.) is into Wales by land, and hath sent his navy thither by sea. And, madam, think verily, as soon as we be delivered, we shall come straight to you, unless death take us by the way,—which we trust he will not,—till we see the king and you peaceably again in your realm; the which we beseech God soon to see, and to send you that your highness desireth. Written at Dieppe the 30th day of August, 1461.

“ Your true subjects and liegemen,  
“ HUNGERFORD and WHITTINGHAM.”<sup>2</sup>

These faithful adherents of Margaret had, with the duke of Somerset, been arrested in the disguise of merchants, by the orders of Louis XI., who, with his usual selfish policy, was willing to propitiate the victorious Edward of York.<sup>3</sup> It was to exert her personal influence with Louis

<sup>1</sup> We have a little modernised the spelling of this literary curiosity, which is quoted in Mr. Halliwell's clever Introduction to the Warkworth Chronicle, from MS. Douce, Bib. Bodl. Oxon. No. 302, fol. 29, vol. a.

<sup>2</sup> Paston Papers, vol. i. p. 247. Sir John Paston has added, by way of note to this letter, “ King Henry is at Kirkhowbre with four men and a child. Queen Margaret at Edinburgh with her son.”

<sup>3</sup> Paston Papers, vol. i. p. 247. Barante. Leclerque. Monstrelet.



for their liberation, as well as to implore his succour in the cause of her unfortunate husband, that Margaret undertook her first voyage to the continent. Leaving king Henry at the court of Scotland, she, with her young son, the prince of Wales, sailed from Kirkcudbright, and landed in Bretagne, April 8th, 1462.<sup>1</sup>

According to one of her French biographers, "Margaret, being entirely destitute of money, was indebted for the means of performing this voyage to the gratitude of a French merchant, to whom, in her early days, she had rendered an important service at her father's court at Nanci. He had since amassed great wealth, by establishing a commercial intercourse between the Low Countries and Scotland. He was in Scotland at the time of Margaret's sore distress, and provided her with a vessel and money for the purpose she required."<sup>2</sup>

The pecuniary aid supplied by private friendship is, however, seldom proportioned to the exigencies of exiled royalty, and Margaret was compelled to make an appeal to the compassion of the duke of Bretagne, immediately after she entered his dominions. The duke presented the royal suppliant with the seasonable donation of twelve thousand crowns; with which she was enabled to administer to the necessities of some of her ruined followers, and to pursue her journey to Chinon in Normandy, where Louis XI. was with his court.<sup>3</sup>

Somerset, Hungerford, and Whyttingham, had been liberated before the arrival of their royal mistress, and had engaged a carvel, or small merchant-vessel, in which they sailed from the inhospitable shores of Normandy, and, unconscious that she had sailed for France, long hovered off the coast of Scotland, in expectation of being able to convey her to some Flemish port.

Queen Margaret of England and Louis XI. of France were the children of a tenderly attached brother and sister, René and Mary of Anjou, and they had been companions in childhood; but the ties of kindred and affection were little regarded by the cold and selfish son of Charles VII. When the distressed queen, with her disinherited son, threw herself at his feet, and, with floods of tears, implored his assistance in behalf of her dethroned consort, she found him callous to her impassioned eloquence, and not only indifferent to her grief, but eager to profit by the adverse circumstances which had brought her as a suppliant to the foot of his throne. The only condition on which he would even advance a small loan of 20,000 livres in her dire necessity was, that she should, in the name of king Henry, pledge Calais to him, as a security for its repayment within twelve months.<sup>4</sup> The exigency of her situation compelled Margaret to accede to these hard terms. Probably she considered, in the very spirit of a female politician, that she made little sacrifice in stipulating to surrender that which was not in her possession.

The agreement into which queen Margaret entered with Louis did not, as her enemies have represented, involve the sale of Calais, but simply amounted to a mortgage of that important place. This is the

<sup>1</sup> Lingard. Hall.

<sup>2</sup> Prevost.

<sup>3</sup> Paston Papers. Barante.

<sup>4</sup> Lingard.

document by which the arrangement is explained; it is still preserved in the archives of France:—

“Margaret, queen of England, being empowered by the king of England, Henry VI., her husband, acknowledges the sum of twenty thousand livres lent to her by the king Louis XI., to the restitution of which she obliges the town and citadel of Calais, promising that as soon as the king, her husband, shall recover it, he will appoint there as captain, his brother Jasper (count of Pembroke) or her cousin, Jean de Foix, count of Candale, who will engage to surrender the said town to king Louis XI. within one year as *his own*, or pay to the said king Louis XI. *forty thousand livres* (double the debt lent). Sealed at Chinon, Juin, 1462.”

This transaction was reported greatly to Margaret's disadvantage in England, and, like the recent surrender of Berwick, was considered by the great body of the people as an act of treason against the realm. Louis bestowed many deceitful marks of regard on Margaret while this negotiation was in progress, and she was complimented by being united with him in the office of sponsor to the infant son of the duke and duchess of Orleans, afterwards Louis XII. of France, whom she presented at the baptismal font.<sup>1</sup>

It was fruitless for Margaret to look for succour from her own family. King René and his son were engaged in a desperate and ruinous contest with Alphonso, king of Arragon, which the resources of Anjou and Provence were over-taxed to support.<sup>2</sup> Kindred and countrymen had failed her in her sore adversity, but her appeal to all true knights to aid her in her attempts to redress the wrongs of her royal spouse, and vindicate the rights of her son, met with a response which proved that the days of chivalry were not ended. “If we are to believe the French historians,” says Guthrie, “Pierre Brezé, the seneschal of Normandy, impelled by a more tender motive than that of compassion or ambition, entered as a volunteer, with two thousand men, into her service.”

Brezé had formerly been the minister and favourite of Margaret's uncle, Charles VII. He was one of the commissioners by whom the inauspicious marriage of that princess with Henry VI. was negotiated, and he had greatly distinguished himself at her bridal tournament. Eighteen years of care and sorrow had passed over the royal beauty, in whose honour sir Pierre de Brezé had maintained the pre-eminence of the “daisye flower,” against all challengers, in the *Place de Carrière*;<sup>3</sup> and now she, who had been the star and inspiration of the poets and chevaliers of France, had returned to her native land, desolate, sorrow-stricken, and dis-crowned, Pierre de Briezé manifested a devotion to her interests which proved how little external circumstances had to do with the attachments excited by this princess.

Margaret sailed for England in October, after an absence of five months, and, eluding the vigilance of Edward's fleet, which had been long in waiting to intercept her, she made the coast of Northumberland. She attempted to land at Tynemouth, but the garrison pointed their can-

<sup>1</sup> Philip de Comines. Barante.

<sup>2</sup> Barante. Villeneuve.

<sup>3</sup> Barante. Villeneuve.

non against her.<sup>1</sup> According to some accounts, she resolutely effected her purpose, but had scarcely set her foot on shore, when the foreign levy, understanding that Warwick was in the field at the head of forty thousand men, fled to their ships in a panic, leaving queen Margaret, her son, and Brezé, almost alone. A fisherman's boat was the only vessel that could be obtained for these illustrious fugitives, and in this frail bark they escaped the fury of the storm, which dashed the tall ships of the recreants who had forsaken them on the rocky coast of Bamborough.

Margaret and Brezé were the first who carried the evil tidings of the loss of her munitions and dearly purchased treasures to her anxious friends at Berwick.<sup>2</sup> The fate of the Frenchmen, who were cut to pieces by sir Robert Ogle when they fled to Holy Island, was probably regarded as a minor misfortune.

Hope must have been an undying faculty of Margaret's nature, and at this crisis it animated her to exertions almost beyond the powers of a woman. The winter was unusually severe, and she, the native of a southern clime, exposed herself unshrinkingly to every sort of hardship. Once more she sought and obtained assistance from the Scotch, and placed her devoted champion, Brezé, at the head of the forces with which she was supplied. She then brought king Henry into the field, who had previously been hidden in her safe refuge at Harlech Castle. Their precious boy she left at Berwick,<sup>3</sup> not wishing to expose his tender childhood, though by this time well inured to hardships, to a northern campaign during so inclement a winter. This was her first separation from her son, and doubtless it was keenly felt by Margaret, who was apt at times to forget the heroine in the mother. Success at first attended her efforts; the important fortresses of Bamborough, Alnwick, and Dunstanburgh<sup>4</sup> were taken by her, and garrisoned with Scotch and Frenchmen. But these alliances did her more harm than good with the people of England; and popular prejudice is always more terrible to princes "than an army with banners."

In the course of this campaign a defection happened among her own party, for which Margaret was not prepared. Somerset, for whose house she had sacrificed so much, surrendered the castle of Bamborough to Warwick, on condition of receiving a pension from king Edward, and, with Suffolk and Exeter, carried their perjured homage to the throne of that monarch. This was followed by the fall of Dunstanburgh and Alnwick. Yet Margaret continued courageously to struggle against fortune, and speedily succeeded in winning back Somerset, Exeter, and Percy, to the banner of the red Rose, and also in re-taking those fortresses. In the spring of 1463, Percy was defeated and slain at Hedgely Moor, by Montague, and a few days later "England was again set on a field" at the fatal battle of Hexham. "King Henry," says Hall, "was the best horseman of his company that day, for he fled so fast, no one could overtake him; yet he was so closely pursued, that

<sup>1</sup> Holingshed. Trussel. Monstrelet. Prevost.

<sup>2</sup> Hall. Holingshed. Trussel. Lingard.

<sup>3</sup> Hall. Holingshed.

<sup>4</sup> Lingard. Hall.

three of his horsemen, or body-guard, with their horses, trapped in blue velvet, were taken—one of them wearing the unfortunate monarch's cap of state, called a bicocket, embroidered with two crowns of gold, and ornamented with pearls."

When the victorious Yorkists broke into the camp at Levels,<sup>1</sup> Margaret, seized with mortal terror for the life of her boy, fled with him on foot into an adjacent forest, guarded only by de Brezé. Here, in momentary dread of being overtaken by the foe, she pursued her doubtful way by the most unfrequented paths; before long she unfortunately fell in with a gang of robbers, who, attracted by the richness of her dress and that of the young prince, surrounded and despoiled them of their jewels and costly robes of estate. While they were quarrelling about the division of the plunder, Margaret, whose intrepidity and presence of mind had been the means of extricating her from a similar peril when captured by lord Stanley's followers, after the battle of Northampton, snatched her son up in her arms, and fled to a distant thicket, unobserved by the pitiless ruffians, who were deciding their dispute at swords' points.<sup>2</sup>

When the shades of evening closed round, the fugitive queen and her son crept fearfully from their retreat, and, uncertain whither to turn for refuge, began to thread the tangled mazes of the forest, dreading, above every other peril, the misfortune of falling into the hands of king Edward's partisans. It was possible that one random turn might lead them into this very danger. While Margaret, bewildered with doubt and alarm, was considering what course to pursue, she perceived, by the light of the moon, another robber, of gigantic stature, advancing towards her with a drawn sword. Gathering courage from the desperation of her situation, Margaret took her son by the hand, and presenting him to the freebooter, with the dignity of look and bearing that were natural to her, she said, "Here, my friend, save the son of your king."<sup>3</sup>

Struck with astonishment at the majestic beauty of the mother, and the touching loveliness of the boy, the robber dropped his weapon at the feet of the royal suppliants, and offered to conduct them to a place of safety. A few words explained to the queen that this outlaw was a Lancastrian gentleman, who had been ruined in king Henry's service, and she frankly committed herself and her son to his care. Taking the prince in his arms, he led the queen to his own retreat, a cave in Hexham Forest, where the royal fugitives were refreshed, and received such attention as his wife was able to afford.<sup>4</sup>

Strong confirmation is given to this incident by the local traditions of Hexham; and no one who has minutely surveyed the antiquities of that town can doubt of the fact. The cave is in a most secluded spot on the

<sup>1</sup> Hexham Levels, near Dowil Water, vulgarly called "Devil's Water."

<sup>2</sup> Wassaburg. Monstrelet, who declares the lord of Varennes (de Brezé) was with Margaret at the first attack of the robbers.

<sup>3</sup> Monstrelet. Wassaburg. Carte.

<sup>4</sup> The transcriber of Monstrelet has miscalled the scene of the adventure Hainault, instead of Hexham Forest. Wassaburg, a contemporary, also well acquainted with Margaret, mentions the fact.

south bank of the little rapid stream which runs at the foot of Blackhill. It is still known by the name of queen Margaret's Cave, and at the time it gave shelter to her and the prince of Wales it must have been surrounded by forest. It is about two miles from Hexham. The entrance to the cave is still very low, and was formerly artfully concealed from sight. Its dimensions are thirty-four by fourteen feet; the height will barely allow a full-grown person to stand upright. A massive pillar of rude masonry, in the centre of the cave, seems to mark the boundary of a wall which, it is said, once divided it into two distinct apartments. When warmed and cheered by fire and lamp, it would not appear quite so dismal a den as at present.

Such was the retreat in which the queen and prince remained *perdu*, for two days of agonising suspense. On the third morning their host encountered sir Pierre de Brezé, who, with his squire Barville, and an English gentleman, having escaped the robbers at Hexham, had been making anxious search for her and the prince.<sup>1</sup>

From these devoted friends Margaret learned the escape of her royal husband, and the terrible vengeance that had been executed on Somerset, and her faithful adherents, the lords Hungerford and Roos.<sup>2</sup> Margaret is said to have received these tidings with floods of tears, the first she had shed since the overthrow of the despairing hopes of Lancaster on the red field of Hexham.<sup>3</sup>

A few hours later, the English gentleman by whom Brezé was accompanied, having gone into the neighbouring villages to gather tidings of public events, encountered the duke of Exeter, and Edmund Beaufort, the brother and successor of the unfortunate Henry duke of Somerset. He conducted them to the retreat of the proscribed queen and the youthful hope of Lancaster.

Margaret's spirits revived at the sight of these princes, whom she had numbered with the slain of Hexham, and she determined to send them to their powerful kinsman, the duke of Burgundy, to solicit an asylum, at the court of Dijon, for herself and the prince of Wales; while she once more proceeded to the court of Scotland, where she imagined king Henry had found refuge. On quitting the dwelling of the generous outlaw, from whom she had received such providential succour in her dire distress, she accorded all she had to bestow—her grateful thanks; but the dukes of Somerset and Exeter offered a portion of their scanty supply of money, as a reward to his wife for the services she had rendered to the queen; but, with a nobility of soul worthy of a loftier station, she refused to receive any portion of that which might be so precious to them at a time of need.

"Of all I have lost," exclaimed the queen, "I regret nothing so much as the power of recompensing such virtue."

Accompanied by Brezé and his squire, and attended by the outlaw of Hexham in the capacity of a guide, Margaret and the young prince her son took the road to Carlisle, where a passage to Scotland had been

<sup>1</sup> Prevost.

<sup>2</sup> They were beheaded in the market-place at Hexham without trial. <sup>3</sup> Prevost.

previously engaged for them, by the care of the gentleman who had accompanied Brezé; and they safely landed at Kirkeudbright. The treaty which had been concluded between king Edward and the Scottish regency rendered it necessary for Margaret to maintain a strict incognito; but there was an Englishman of the name of Cork, who was unfortunately well acquainted with her person, the majestic beauty of which it was scarcely possible to disguise. He was a Yorkist, and determined to open a path to fortune, by delivering to king Edward the last hope and support of the cause of the red Rose. He had confederates in the town, and with their assistance he surprised Margaret's brave protectors, Brezé and his squire Barville, and hurried them on board a vessel which he had provided for the purpose, and with less difficulty succeeded in the abduction of the helpless queen and her little son. Neither party were aware of the captivity of the other, till the first rays of the sun enabled the queen and Brezé to recognise each other, and afforded a sad conviction of their peril. The great personal strength of Brezé, however, had enabled him to extricate himself from his bonds in the course of the night, and he watched an opportunity for removing those of his squire. They were then two against five, but, having got possession of the oars, they contrived to master their opponents, and, after a desperate struggle, slew some, and threw the others overboard, not without extreme peril of upsetting the boat.

After tossing for some hours in the gulf of Solway, the wind drove the boat on a sand-bank near Cantyre, where there appeared every chance of her being beaten to pieces by the waves. It was, however, so near the shore, that Brezé, wading knee-deep in sand and water, succeeded in conveying the queen on his shoulders to a dry spot, and Barville performed the same service for the prince of Wales.<sup>1</sup> The coast they had gained was wild and barren; but here, at least, Margaret had no fear of being recognised, since the peasantry were so ignorant, that they could not believe any one was a queen, unless she had a crown on her head and a sceptre in her hand. In one of the obscure hamlets of this rude country, Margaret remained with her son, under the care of Brezé, while she despatched Barville to Edinburgh, to ascertain from public report the general state of affairs in England, and the fate of king Henry.<sup>2</sup>

The tidings were such as to convince her that she must hoard her energies for better days; and though she privately visited Edinburgh, to try the effect of her personal eloquence once more, she only found that her presence caused great uneasiness to the government. All the favour she could obtain was assistance for returning to her friends in Northumberland, who still continued with determined valour to hold out the fortress of Bamborough. From this place, Margaret, with a heavy heart, embarked for Flanders, with her son and some of her ladies, who had taken refuge there, after the disappearance of their royal mistress. Sir John Fortescue,—who had abandoned his office as lord-chief-justice of England, to follow the fortunes of the proscribed queen and his princely

<sup>1</sup> Prevost.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*.

pupil,—Dr. Morton, afterwards the famous cardinal archbishop of York, and about two hundred of the ruined adherents of Lancaster, shared her flight.

Her usual ill-luck, with regard to weather, attended Margaret on this voyage. The first day she sailed, her vessel was separated by a terrible storm from its consort, and during twelve hours she expected every moment to be engulfed in the tempestuous waves; and when the violence of the hurricane abated, her ship was so greatly damaged, that she was forced to put into the port of Ecluse, in the dominions of her hereditary enemy, the duke of Burgundy.<sup>1</sup> She left prince Edward at Bruges, and went on to Lille, to meet the eldest son of Philip of Burgundy, count de Charolois, whose mother was nearly related to Henry VI. This prince came out of the town to meet Margaret, with the greatest marks of respect. From Lille she passed on to Bethune, to meet duke Philip; but, as he was at St. Pol, he sent a guard of archers for her escort, she having proposed travelling by the way of Hesdin, because she dreaded the skirmishing parties from the garrison of Calais. When she arrived at St. Pol, the duke of Burgundy gave her a very honourable reception, and entertained her with grand festivities.<sup>2</sup> When he understood her great pecuniary distress, and the painful straits to which her faithful followers were reduced, he, with truly princely munificence, presented to each of her ladies a hundred crowns: to Brezé, who had expended the whole of his fortune in her service, a thousand; and to Margaret herself he gave an order on his treasurer to pay her on the spot twelve thousand crowns. The treasurer took a base advantage of the misfortunes of the queen, by endeavouring to defraud her of half the money. Margaret, who was not of a spirit to put up tamely with such a wrong, informed the duke of the villany of his minister. Philip, in a transport of indignation, ordered him to be put to death; and the sentence would have been executed but for Margaret's intercession in his favour.<sup>3</sup> She was sensibly touched with the generous treatment she had experienced from the duke of Burgundy, whom, from her cradle, she had regarded with the deepest-rooted hostility, and had often been accustomed to say, "that if by any chance he were to fall into her hands, she would make the axe pass between his head and shoulders."<sup>4</sup>

If this unfeminine and impolitic speech reached the ears of Philip the Good, he did not allow it to influence his conduct towards the fallen queen, when she condescended to become a suppliant for his bounty; but, remembering only that they claimed their descent from the same royal stock, he treated her in all respects as a princess of the house of France, and the consort of a king of England. He would not, however, violate his treaty with king Edward, nor suffer his subjects to be involved in her quarrel; but when she had stayed, as long as it pleased

<sup>1</sup> Barante. Monstrelet. The latter says, after narrating the adventure in the forest of Hexham, that Margaret after got to the coast and embarked for Sluys, which shows that the adventure happened in England.

<sup>2</sup> Barante, Chron. ducs de Bourgogne. Baudier.

<sup>3</sup> Chronicles of Lorraine, Mss. of the Bibliothèque du Roi.

<sup>4</sup> Barante.

her to remain his guest, he sent her with an honourable escort to Bar, the dominion of her brother.<sup>1</sup>

King René felt deeply grateful for the hospitable welcome thus afforded to his distressed child, by his ancient antagonist and victor. He addressed a letter to Philip of Burgundy, full of thanks, declaring "he could not have expected, nor did he merit, such attentions."

After quitting the court of Burgundy, Margaret travelled to Lorraine. She passed some days at St. Michiel, with fifty nobles and gentlemen of her suite. Part of that year she sojourned with her sister, Yolande, countess of Vaudemonte, and her noble-minded brother, John of Calabria.<sup>2</sup> After this time she abode at Amboise, the court of the queen of France.

The distracted state of king René's affairs in his own dominions, utterly precluded him from exerting himself in his daughter's service, though not unfrequently solicited to draw his knightly sword in her cause. The Provençal bards took the heroism and misfortunes of their hapless princess for their theme, and René's own minstrel and namesake was accustomed to assail his royal ear, in his festal halls, with these strains:—

"Arouse thee, arouse thee, king René,  
Nor let sorrow thy spirit beguile!  
Thy daughter, the spouse of king Henry,  
Now weeps, now implores with a smile."<sup>3</sup>

René, however, was compelled to remain a passive sympathiser in Margaret's affliction. All he could do for her was to afford her an asylum in her adversity. He gave her the ancient castle of Kuerere, in the diocese of Verdun, near the town of St. Michiel, for her residence, and contributed to her support, as far as his narrow means would allow.<sup>4</sup> Here Margaret, bereaved of all the attributes of royalty, save those that were beyond the power of adverse fortune to alienate, dwelt with the remnant of her ruined friends, and occupied herself in superintending the education of the last tender bud of the red Rose of Lancaster, whom she yet fondly hoped to see restored to his country, and his former lofty expectations. During the seven years of their exile, sir John Fortescue continued to reside with queen Margaret and her son; and, observing that his beloved pupil was too much taken up with martial exercises, he wrote his celebrated work on the constitution of England, "*De Laudibus Legum Angliæ*," to instruct him in a higher sort of knowledge, the true science of royalty.<sup>5</sup>

A deeper shade of gloom pervaded the exiled court of Margaret, when the tidings reached her, through her secret adherents in England, that her unfortunate consort had at length fallen into the hands of his successful rival.

When king Henry fled from the lost battle of Hexham, he gained an asylum among his loyal subjects of Westmoreland and Lancashire, where

<sup>1</sup> Barante. Monstrelet, p. 290.

<sup>2</sup> Villeneuve.

<sup>3</sup> "Reveille-toi, reveille-toi, roi René," &c.—*Provençal Ballad*. Villeneuve.

<sup>5</sup> Life of sir John Fortescue



he was many months concealed, sometimes in the house of John Machell, at Crackenthorp, sometimes like a hermit in a cave. There are, even now, traces of his residence in several of the northern halls and castles. The glove, boot, and spoon, he left with his kind host, sir Ralph Pudsey, at Bolton Hall, in Yorkshire, are still preserved. They were the only gifts fortune had left it in his power to bestow. The size of the glove and boot show that his hands and feet were small. There is also a well where he used to bathe, which retains the name of king Henry's Well.

King Henry's retreat in Lancashire was betrayed by a monk of Abingdon, and he was taken by the servants of sir John Harrington as he sat at dinner at Waddington Hall. He was conducted to London in the most ignominious manner, with his legs fastened to the stirrups of the sorry nag on which he was mounted, and an insulting placard affixed to his shoulders. At Islington he was met by the earl of Warwick, who issued a proclamation forbidding any one to treat him with respect, and afforded an example of wanton brutality to the mob, by leading the royal captive thrice round the pillory, as if he had been a common felon, crying aloud, "Treason, treason, and behold the traitor!"

Henry endured these outrages with the firmness of a hero, and the meekness of a saint. "Forsooth, and forsooth, ye do foully to smite the Lord's anointed,"<sup>1</sup> was his mild rebuke to a ruffian who was base enough to strike him in that hour of misery. The following touching lines, which have been attributed to Henry VI., were probably written during his long imprisonment in the Tower:—

Kingdoms are but cares,  
State is devoid of stay,  
Riches are ready snares,  
And hasten to decay.

Who meaneth to remove the rocke  
Out of his slimy mud,  
Shall mire himself, and hardly 'scape  
The swelling of the flood."

There are preserved two sentences written and given by him to a knight<sup>2</sup> who had the care of him:—

"Patience is the armour and conquest of the godly; this meriteth mercy, when causeless is suffered sorrow."

"Nought else is war but fury and madness, wherein is not advice, but rashness; not right, but rage, ruleth and reigneth."

Queen Margaret must have felt the indignity and cruelty with which her unoffending consort was treated, as the greatest aggravation of all her own hard trials. She was still formidable to the reigning sovereign of England, who established a sort of coast-guard, to prevent her from effecting a sudden descent on the shores of England. It has been confidently asserted that Margaret herself visited England, disguised as a priest, in the train of the archbishop of Narbonne, in 1467.<sup>3</sup> William of Worcester records, that various persons, who were apprehended on

<sup>1</sup> Warkworth Chronicle. Hall.

<sup>2</sup> Nugæ Antiquæ. The Harrington family founded their fortunes on the capture of the king, as sir John Harrington, in the Nugæ Antiquæ, expressly affirms: and as these verses and lines are preserved in that work, doubtless, they were given by Henry VI. to Harrington's ancestor.

<sup>3</sup> Prevost.

suspicion of having letters from queen Margaret in their possession, were tortured and put to death. Sir Thomas Cook, a London alderman, was accused of treason, and fined eight thousand marks, because Hawkins, one of Margaret's agents, when put to the rack in the Tower, confessed "that he had attempted to borrow money for her of this wealthy knight;" and though sir Thomas Cook had refused to lend it, he was brought in great peril of his life, for not having disclosed the attempt of Hawkins.<sup>1</sup> A poor shoemaker was pinched to death with red-hot pincers, for assisting the exiled queen to carry on a correspondence with her adherents in England, but he resolutely refused to betray the parties with whom Margaret was in league.<sup>2</sup> When Harlech Castle was taken in the same year, many letters, to and from queen Margaret, fell into the hands of king Edward.

An emissary of Margaret, who was taken in this stronghold of her outlawed adherents (which had so long held out in defiance of Edward and all his puissance) accused the earl of Warwick of having, in his late mission to the continent, spoken favourably of the exiled queen in his conference with Louis XI., at Rouen. Warwick refused to leave his castle to be confronted with his accuser. Two years afterwards he was in arms with the avowed intention of hurling Edward IV. from the throne, but was forced to retreat to France, where king Louis received him.

Queen Margaret, in the December of 1469, left her lonely castle in Verdun, and came to Tours with prince Edward, to meet Louis XI., her father, her brother, her sister Yolante, and Ferry count of Vaudemonte, who had all assembled there, to hold a council on the best means of improving the momentous crisis for the cause of Lancaster. Margaret and her father were so greatly agitated at the prospect that appeared opening for her in England, that, when they met, they embraced with floods of tears. Every one present was moved, not even excepting the cold-hearted Louis XI., who is said to have betrayed unwonted tokens of sensibility on this occasion. He had never shown the slightest sympathy in the griefs and calamities of his unfortunate kinswoman; but, in the circumstances that excited her hopes, he could perceive a prospect of great political advantages for himself, and now he treated her with all the respect and honour that her high rank and near relationship to himself demanded, and exerted all his influence to effect a personal reconciliation between the exiled queen and the author of all her misfortunes, the earl of Warwick.

So deeply rooted was the animosity which Margaret cherished against this nobleman, that at first she positively refused to see or to speak to him; nor can we greatly wonder at the nature of her feelings, when we reflect that, to the bitterness of twenty years of personal provocations against herself (commencing with the murder of the duke of Suffolk), had lately been added the injurious and barbarous usage of her unoffending lord, king Henry. When Warwick arrived at Tours, he was introduced into the presence of Margaret by Louis XI., who, in the character

<sup>1</sup> Hollingshed.

<sup>2</sup> Speed. Worcester. Stow.

of a mediator between these deadly foes, engaged to procure the queen's pardon for the earl. "In this," says the chronicler,<sup>1</sup> "queen Margaret was right difficult, and showed to the king of France, in presence of the duke of Guienne, that with honour to herself and her son she might not, and she would not, pardon the said earl, who had been the greatest cause of the downfall of king Henry, and that never of her own spirit might she be contented with him, *ne* pardon him." Queen Margaret showed "that it would be greatly prejudicial to pardon the earl of Warwick; for in England she and her son had certain parties and friends, which they might likely lose by this means, which would do them more hindrance than the earl and his allies could do them good." Wherefore she besought the king of France "to leave off speaking for the said pardon and alliance."

The earl of Warwick on this entered into a defence of his conduct, owning "that it was by his means the queen was dethroned, but that, before he had done or thought of doing her any harm, her false counsellors had plotted his destruction, body and goods, and that no nobleman, outraged and *despaired* (driven to desperation), could have done otherwise."

It does not appear that Warwick mentioned the execution of his father, the earl of Salisbury, which is almost a confirmation of the statements of those historians who deny that he was beheaded by Margaret.

In this scene, Margaret seems to have demeaned herself more like an offended woman than a queen and a political leader. But the more loftily she spoke and looked, the more submissive her former adversary became. "He told her 'he had been the means of upsetting king Edward and unsettling his realm, and that he would, for the time to come, be as much his foe as he had formerly been his friend and maker.'<sup>2</sup> He besought the queen and prince 'that so they would take him, and repute him, and forgive him all he had done against them, offering himself to be bounden by all manner of ways to be their true and faithful subject for the time to come; and that he would set, for his surety, the king of France.' King Louis, being then present, agreed to be surety, praying the queen Margaret 'that at his request she would pardon the earl of Warwick, showing the great love he had to the said earl, for whom he would do more than any man living.' And so queen Margaret, being likewise urged by the agents of king René her father, after many treaties and messages, pardoned the earl of Warwick, and so did her son also."

The earl of Oxford, who had, by the exigency of circumstances, been compelled to acknowledge the authority of the white Rose sovereign for a while, came also with Warwick, to entreat queen Margaret's forgiveness, and permission to renew his homage to the house of Lancaster. The queen received *his* supplication in a very different spirit from that with which she accorded her forgiveness (if such it might be

<sup>1</sup> "Manner and Guiding of the earl of Warwick. Harleian MS., edited by sir Henry Ellis." It is apparently written by a spy of Edward IV.

<sup>2</sup> Harleian MS., edited by sir H. Ellis.

called) to Warwick, for she said—"Your pardon is right easy to *purchase*, for well I know you and your friends have suffered *much things* for king Henry's quarrels."<sup>1</sup>

On the 15th of July, they all proceeded to Angers, where the countess of Warwick and her youngest daughter were presented to queen Margaret, and a marriage between the prince of Wales and the lady Anne was proposed by Louis. Margaret treated the first overtures for this strange alliance with the most unqualified contempt. Edward IV.'s brother Clarence had espoused the lady Isabel, Anne's elder sister, and Margaret appears to have had an intuitive feeling of the danger of the connexion.

"Touching the manner of the marriage," pursues the spy, "the queen would not in anywise consent, or yield to any request the king of France might make her. Sometimes she said, that 'she saw never honour nor profit, *ne* for her, *ne* for her son the prince.' Another time she 'alleged that she would and she should find a more profitable party, and of more advantage with the king of England,' (Edward IV.) Indeed, she showed to the king of France a letter, which she said was sent to her out of England that last week, by the which was offered to her son my lady princess." This was Elizabeth of York, then the heiress of Edward IV.

Queen Margaret persevered fifteen days before she would consent to the alliance with Warwick; to which, at last, by the advice of the counsellors of her father, king René, she agreed, and the marriage was promised in presence of the king of France and the duke of Guienne (brother to Louis XI.) according to the following articles:<sup>2</sup>—

"First, the earl of Warwick swore upon the true cross at Angers, in St. Mary's Church, that *without change* he shall always hold the party of king Henry, and serve him, the queen, and prince, as a true and faithful subject oweth to serve his sovereign lord.

"The king of France and his brother, then clothed in canvass robes, in the said church of St. Mary, swore they would help and sustain to the utmost of their power the earl of Warwick in the quarrel of king Henry. Queen Margaret then swore to treat the earl as true and faithful to king Henry and the prince, and for his deeds past *never to make him any reproach*.

"After the recovery of the kingdom of England, the prince was to be regent of all the realm, and the duke of Clarence to have all his own lands and those of the duke of York. *Item*, From that time forth the daughter of the earl of Warwick shall be *put and remain in the hands and the keeping of the queen* Margaret; but the said marriage not to be perfected till the earl of Warwick had been with an army over into England, and recovered the realm in the most part thereof for king Henry. The earl of Warwick affirmed, at the same time, that if he were once over the sea, he should have more than fifty thousand fighters at his commandment; but if the king of France would help him with a

<sup>1</sup> Chron. in Stow's Collections. Harleian MS. The words *much things* show Margaret's broken English.

<sup>2</sup> Chron. in Stow's Collections. Harleian MSS.

few folk, he would pass the sea without delay. Louis gave a subsidy of forty-six thousand crowns, besides two thousand French archers."<sup>1</sup>

According to some of the French chroniclers, the prince of Wales, who had entered his eighteenth year, and was one of the handsomest and most accomplished princes in Europe, was very desirous of becoming the husband of Anne Neville, whom he had seen at Paris some time before. They were allied in blood, for Anne's great-grandmother, the countess of Westmoreland, was Joanna Beaufort, the daughter of John of Gaunt, the patriarchal stem of the royal line of Lancaster. Anne of Warwick was co-heiress to mighty possessions, which rendered her a match, in point of wealth, not unworthy of a spouse in full possession of regal power.

While these negotiations were pending, Louis's queen gave birth to a fair son at Amboise, afterwards Charles VIII. Edward, prince of Wales, was complimented with the office of godfather to the infant dauphin, the other sponsor being James of France.<sup>2</sup> Some historians say that Margaret was the godmother; but there had never been any regard between her and the queen of France, Charlotte of Savoy, who, being desirous of marrying her sister, Bona of Savoy, to Edward IV., had always treated the fallen queen of the Lancastrian sovereign with a contempt that the high spirit of Margaret could scarcely brook.<sup>3</sup>

After the christening of the young dauphin, which was solemnised with great splendour at Amboise, Edward of Lancaster plighted his nuptial troth to Anne Neville, in the presence of queen Margaret, the king of France, king René, and his second wife, Jeanne de Laval, the earl and countess of Warwick, the duke and duchess of Clarence, and the faithful adherents of the cause of the red Rose, of whom Margaret's exiled court was composed.<sup>4</sup>

This romantic marriage was celebrated at the latter end of July, or the beginning of August, 1470, and was commemorated with feasts and high rejoicings. Warwick departed from Angers on the 4th of August,<sup>5</sup> leaving his countess and the newly wedded princess of Wales, as pledges of his fidelity, with queen Margaret and her son. They were entertained with princely hospitality by king René till the autumn, when Margaret, her son, and his bride, with the countess of Warwick, proceeded to Paris, with a guard of honour for their escort. They arrived in November, and Margaret was received, by the express orders of Louis XI., with all the honours due to a queen of France. The archbishop of Paris, the university, the parliament, the officers of the Châtelet, the provost of the merchants, all in their habits of ceremony, both received her and conducted her out of the city. All the streets through which she passed, from the gate of St. Jacques to the palace of St. Paul, were hung with rich tapestry, and nothing was omitted that could add

<sup>1</sup> The original of Charles duke of Guienne's oath to assist queen Margaret, approving also of the marriage of Anne of Warwick, is to be found in Cottonian MS., Vespasian, F. 111, p. 32, r. o. It is signed by himself, Angers, July 30, 1470

<sup>2</sup> Comines. Wassaburg. Villeneuve. Monstrelet.

<sup>3</sup> Hall.

<sup>4</sup> Comines. Wassaburg. Bourdigne. Villeneuve.

<sup>5</sup> Harleian MSS.

to the solemnity of her reception. Maître Nicolle Giles, in his history, says—"The streets of Paris were gaily dressed to welcome them, and they were lodged in the palace, where they received the news of the landing of the earl of Warwick, and that king Henry was freed, and in possession of his kingdom; upon which queen Margaret with all her company resolved to return to England."

King René made great personal sacrifices, exhausting both money and credit, to assist his energetic daughter in her purveyances for the voyage to England;<sup>2</sup> and in the month of February, 1471, all was ready for her embarkation, but—the wind. The atmospherical influences were always unfavourable to Margaret, and at this momentous crisis of her fate, as on many a previous one, it might have been said, "The stars in their courses fought against Siserà." Thrice did she, in defiance of all warnings from the men of Harfleur, put to sea with her armament, and as often was she driven back on the coast of Normandy, not without damage to her ships; till many of her followers protested that this strange opposition of winds and waves was caused by sorcery.<sup>3</sup> Others endeavoured to prevail on her to relinquish her intention of proceeding to England, as it appeared in a manner forbidden to her. But Margaret's strong mind rejected with equal contempt the superstitious notions of either magic or omens. She knew on how critical a balance hung the fortunes of her husband and her son; and although the people in all the towns through which Warwick had passed, on his triumphant march to London, had tossed the white rose from their caps, shouting, "A Harry! a Harry!—A Warwick! a Warwick!"<sup>4</sup> and celebrated the restoration of holy Henry to the royal power with bonfires, and every token of popular rejoicing, yet she had too sore experience of the fickle nature of popular excitement, not to feel the importance of straining every nerve, to improve the present favourable juncture. She was not ignorant of the return of king Edward, and the defection of "false, perjured, fleeing Clarence;" and her anxiety to reach the scene of action, was proportioned to the desperate nature of the closely contested game that was playing there. Up to the last moment of her compulsory sojourn on the shores of Normandy, she continued to levy forces, and to raise munitions, for the aid of Warwick and the king.<sup>5</sup>

On the 24th of March she once more put to sea with her fleet, and, despite of all opposing influences of the elements, pursued her inauspicious voyage to England. The passage, which, with a favourable wind, might have been achieved in twelve hours, was protracted sixteen tedious days and nights, which were spent by the anxious queen in a fever of agonising impatience. On Easter-eve her long-baffled fleet made the port of Weymouth.<sup>6</sup> Margaret, with her son the prince of Wales, and his newly espoused consort, the prior of St. John's (called the treasurer of England), sir John Fortescue, sir Henry Rous, and many others, landed April 13th. They went immediately to the abbey of Cearne, a small religious house close by, to refresh themselves after the fatigues

<sup>1</sup> Felibien, *Histoire de Paris*, vol. ii. p. 861.

<sup>2</sup> Prevost.

<sup>3</sup> Hafl.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Fleetwood's *Chronicle*, edited by J. Bruce.

of the voyage. It was there that queen Margaret, with the prince and princess of Wales, kept their Easter-festival, at the very time their cause was receiving its death-blow on the fatal heath of Barnet,<sup>1</sup> where the weather, as will be well remembered, once more turned the fortunes of the day against the fated Rose of Lancaster.

When the dreadful news of the death of Warwick and the re-capture of king Henry, was brought to Margaret on the following day, she fell to the ground in a deep swoon, and for a long time remained in a speechless stupor of despair, as if her faculties had been overpowered by the greatness of this unexpected blow.<sup>2</sup> When she revived to consciousness, it was only to bewail the evil destiny of her luckless consort. "In her agony, she reviled the calamitous temper of the times in which she lived, and reproached herself," says Hall, "for all her painful labours, now turned to her own misery, and declared 'she desired rather to die than live longer in this state of infelicity,' " as if she foresaw the dark adversities that were yet in store for her.

When the soothing caresses of her beloved son had in some manner restored her to herself, she departed, with all her company, to the famous sanctuary of Beaulieu Abbey, where she registered herself, and all who came with her, as privileged persons.<sup>3</sup> Here she found the countess of Warwick, who had embarked at Harfleur at the same time with her, but, having a swifter-sailing vessel, had landed before her at Portsmouth, and proceeded to Southampton, with intent to join the queen at Weymouth. On the road, the countess had received the mournful news of her husband's defeat and death at Barnet, and, fearing to proceed, fled across the New Forest,<sup>4</sup> "and so," says Fleetwood, "took her to the protection of the sanctuary of an abbey called Beaulieu, which has as great privileges as that of Westminster, or of St. Martin's, at London." A melancholy meeting it must have been, between the despairing queen, the widowed countess, and the princess of Wales, now so sorrowfully linked in fellowship of woe.

As soon as the retreat of the queen was known, she was visited by the young fiery duke of Somerset, and his brother, Jasper Tudor, the king's half-brother, and many other of the Lancastrian nobles, who welcomed her to England. Finding her almost drowned in sorrow, they strove to rouse her from her dejection, by telling her "they had already a good puissance in the field, and trusted, with the encouragement of her presence and that of the prince, soon to draw all the northern and western counties to the banner of the red Rose."<sup>5</sup>

The elastic spirits of Margaret were greatly revived and comforted by the cheering speeches of these ardent partisans, and she proceeded to explain to them the causes that delayed her coming to them, in time to support Warwick, and the reasons that had induced her to take sanctuary, which was for the security of the prince her son, for whose precious safety "she passionately implored them to provide." She added, "that it was her opinion no good would be done in the field *this time*, and

<sup>1</sup> Fleetwood's Chronicle.

<sup>2</sup> Fleetwood's Chronicle, p. 22.

<sup>3</sup> Hall. Fleetwood.

<sup>4</sup> Hall. Fleetwood. Lingard.

<sup>5</sup> Hall, p. 298.



therefore it would be best for her and the prince, with such as chose to share their fortunes, to return to France, and there to tarry till it pleased God to send her better luck."<sup>1</sup>

But the gallant young prince would not consent to this arrangement,<sup>2</sup> and Somerset told the queen, with some warmth, "that there was no occasion to waste any more words, for they were all determined, while their lives lasted, still to keep war against their enemies." Margaret, overborne by his violence, at last said, "Well, be it so."<sup>3</sup> She then consented to quit her asylum, and proceeded with the Lancastrian lords to Bath. It was a peculiarity in Margaret's campaigns, that she always kept the place of her destination a profound secret.

Owing to this caution, and the entire devotion of the western counties to her cause, she had got a great army in the field, ready to oppose Edward IV., while her actual locality remained unknown to him. He then advanced to Marlborough; but, as her army was not equal in strength to his own victorious forces, she retreated from Bath to Bristol, with the intention of crossing the Severn at Gloucester, to form a junction with Jasper Tudor's army in Wales.<sup>4</sup> Could this purpose have been effected, the biographers of Margaret of Anjou might have had a far different tale to record, than the events of the dismal day of Tewksbury. But the men of Gloucester had fortified the bridge, and would not permit her to pass, neither for threats nor fair words, though she had some friends in the city, through whom she offered large bribes; but "they were under the obeisance of the duke of Gloucester," they replied, "and bound to oppose her passage."

Margaret then passed on to Tewksbury. Edward had arrived within a mile of that place before she came, and was ready to do battle with her. Though she had marched seven-and-thirty miles that day with her army, and was greatly overcome with vexation and fatigue, she was urgent with Somerset to press on to her friends in Wales; but Somerset, with inflexible obstinacy, expressed his determination, "there to tarry, and take such fortune as God should send;" and so, "taking his will for reason, he pitched his camp in the fair park, and there entrenched himself, sorely against the opinion, not only of the queen, but all the experienced captains of the army."<sup>5</sup> Somerset and his brother led the advanced guard; the prince of Wales, under the direction of lord Wenlock, and that military monk, the prior of St. John's, commanded the van; the earl of Devonshire the rearward. When the battle was thus ordered, queen Margaret, and her son, the prince, rode about the field, and from rank to rank, encouraging the soldiers with promises of large rewards, promotions, and everlasting renown, if they won the victory. The fight commenced on the 4th of May.

Our limits will not permit us to enter into the details of the battle, which was lost either through the treachery of lord Wenlock, or the inconsiderate fury of Somerset; who, finding Wenlock inactively sitting on his horse, in the market-place of Tewksbury, with his laggard

<sup>1</sup> Hall.<sup>2</sup> Prevost.<sup>3</sup> Hall.<sup>4</sup> Lingard. Hall. Holingshed.<sup>5</sup> Hall. Holingshed.



host, when his presence was most required in the field, made fiercely up to him, and, calling him "Traitor!" cleft his skull with his battle-axe. The men under Wenlock's banner, panic-stricken at the fate of their leader, fled. The prince of Wales had no experience as a general, and his personal courage was unavailing to redeem the fortunes of the day.

When queen Margaret, who was an agonised spectator of the discomfiture of her troops, saw that the day was going against her, she could with difficulty be withheld from rushing into the *mêlée*; but at length, exhausted by the violence of her feelings, she was carried in a state of insensibility to her chariot, by her faithful attendants, and was thus conveyed through the gates of Tewksbury Park to a small religious house hard by,<sup>1</sup> where her equally unfortunate daughter-in-law, Anne of Warwick, the countess of Devonshire, and lady Katherine Vaux, had already taken refuge. According to Fleetwood's Chronicle, she remained there till Tuesday, May 7th, three days after the battle. Other writers affirm that she was captured on the same day which saw the hopes of Lancaster crushed, with her "gallant springing young Plantagenet," on the bloody field of Tewksbury.

The generally received historical tradition, of the manner of the prince of Wales's death, has been contested, because two contemporary chroniclers, Warkworth and Fleetwood, have stated that he was slain in the field, calling on his brother-in-law Clarence for help. In the field he probably was slain—that part of the plain of Tewksbury, which, in memory of that foul and most revolting murder, is still called "the bloody field." Sir Richard Crofts, to whom the princely novice had surrendered, tempted by the proclamation, "that whoever should bring Edward (called prince) to the king, should receive one hundred pounds a-year for life, and the prince's life be spared," "nothing mistrusting," says Hall, "the king's promise, brought forth his prisoner, being a goodly well-featured young gentleman, of almost feminine beauty." King Edward, struck with the noble presence of the youth, after he had well considered him, demanded, "How he durst so presumptuously enter his realms with banners displayed against him?"

"To recover my father's crown and mine own inheritance," was the bold, but rash reply of the fettered *lionceau* of Plantagenet.

Edward basely struck the gallant stripling in the face with his gauntlet, which was the signal for his pitiless attendants to despatch him with their daggers. A small unadorned slab of grey marble, in the abbey-church of Tewksbury, points out the spot where the last hope of Anjou's heroine, and the royal line of Lancaster, was consigned, without funeral pomp, to an unhonoured grave, among the meaner victims of his victorious foe.<sup>2</sup>

On the following day, queen Margaret's retreat was made known to king Edward, as he was on his way to Worcester, and he was assured that she should be at his command. She was brought to him at Coventry, May 11th, by her old enemy, sir William Stanley, by whom. it is

<sup>1</sup> This account is collated from the French historians and our own.

<sup>2</sup> Leland's Collectanea. Lingard.

said, the first news of the massacre of her beloved son was revealed to the bereaved mother, in a manner, that was calculated to aggravate the bitterness of this dreadful blow.

Margaret, in the first transports of maternal agony, invoked the most terrible maledictions, on the head of the ruthless Edward and his posterity, which Stanley was inhuman enough to repeat to his royal master, together with all the frantic expressions she had used against him during their journey. Edward was at first so much exasperated, that he thought of putting her to death; but no Plantagenet ever shed the blood of a woman, and he contented himself by forcing her to grace his triumphant progress towards the metropolis. The youthful widow of her murdered son, Anne of Warwick, who had in one little fortnight been bereaved of her father, her uncle, her young gallant husband, and the name of princess of Wales, some say, was another of the mournful attendants on this abhorrent pageant.

On the 22d of May, being the eve of the Ascension, Margaret and her unfortunate daughter-in-law entered London together, in the train of the haughty victor, and it is said, by the romantic French biographer of Margaret,<sup>1</sup> that they travelled in the same chariot; but, even if it were so, they were separated immediately on their arrival, and Margaret was incarcerated in one of the most dismal of the prison lodgings, in that gloomy fortress where her royal husband was already immured—that husband to whom she was now so near, after long years of separation, and yet was to behold no more.

The same night that Margaret of Anjou was brought as a captive to the Tower of London, she was made a widow. "That night, between eleven and twelve of the o'clock," writes the chronicler in Leland, "was king Henry, being prisoner in the Tower, put to death, the duke of Gloucester and divers of his men being in the Tower, that night." "May God give him time for repentance, whoever he was, who laid his sacrilegious hands on the Lord's anointed," adds the continuator of the *Chronicles of Croyland*.<sup>2</sup>

Tradition points out an octagonal room in the Wakefield tower as the scene of the midnight murder of Henry VI. It was there that he had, for five years, eaten the bread of affliction during his lonely captivity, from 1465. A few learned manuscripts, and devotional books, a

<sup>1</sup> Prevost.

<sup>2</sup> A contemporary historian of the highest authority. The popular historical tradition of Henry VI.'s murder, like that of his son, has been a matter of great dispute among modern writers, on the ground of Fleetwood's assertion, "that on the news of the utter ruin of his party, the death of his son, and the capture of queen Margaret, he took it in such ire, despite, and indignation, that of pure displeasure and melancholy he died, 23d of May." Mr. Halliwell, in his learned introduction and notes to the *Warkworth Chronicle*, and Dr. Lingard, in his notes on the reign of Henry VI., have most ably refuted the objections of those writers, who, on the most shadowy reasons, attempt to controvert every murder with which Edward IV. and Richard III. sought to establish their blood-bought thrones. That the death of Henry was predetermined by king Edward, even when uncertain of the event of the battle of Barnet, may be gathered from his letter to Clarence, "to keep king Henry out of sanctuary."—Leland Coll. ii. 108.

bird that was the companion of his solitude, his relics, and the occasional visits of one or two learned monks, who were permitted to administer to his spiritual wants, were all the solaces he received in his captivity.

About thirty years after his death, a metrical life of Henry VI. was completed by a monk of Windsor, his contemporary. It opens with a beautiful Latin hymn, of which, with the assistance of a learned friend,<sup>1</sup> I am enabled to offer the reader a literal translation, in the original metre.

**"SALVE, MILES PRECIOSI!**

**I.**

Hail, Henry, soldier of the Lord!  
In whom all precious gifts accord,  
Branch of the heavenly vine;  
Rooted in charity and love,  
Serenely blooming as above,  
The saints angelic shine.

**II.**

"Hail, flower of true nobility!  
Honour, and praise, and dignity,  
Adorn thy diadem;  
Meek father of the fatherless,  
Thy people's succour in distress;  
The church's strength and gem.

**III.**

"Hail, pious king, in whom we see  
The graces of humility

With spotless goodness crown'd!  
By sorrow stricken and oppress'd;  
To those who vainly sigh for rest,  
Mirror of patience found.

**IV.**

"Hail, beacon of celestial light,  
Whose beams may guide our steps  
aright,  
Thy blessed course to trace!  
In virtue's paths for ever seen,  
Mild, and ineffably serene,  
Radiant with every grace.

**V.**

"Hail, whom the King of endless time  
Hath call'd to angel choirs sublime,  
In realms for ever bless'd!  
May we, who now admiring raise  
These all-unworthy notes of praise,  
Share in thy glorious rest!"<sup>2</sup>

King Edward and the Duke of Gloucester, as if apprehensive of some outburst of popular indignation, left London early in the same morning that the tragic pageant, of exposing the corpse of their royal victim to public view, was to take place;<sup>3</sup> an exhibition that was a matter of political expediency, to prevent any further attempts for his deliverance.

The day after the Ascension, the last Lancastrian king was "borne barefaced on the bier," surrounded by more glaives and bills than torches, through Cheapside to St. Paul's, that every man might see him; "and there the silent witness of the blood, that welled from his fresh wounds upon the pavement, gave an indubitable token of the manner of his death."<sup>4</sup> The same awful circumstance occurred when they brought him to Blackfriars, and this is recorded by four contemporary authorities, in quaint but powerful language.<sup>5</sup>

Very brief was the interval between the death and funeral of holy Henry. In the evening his bloody hearse was placed in a lighted barge

<sup>1</sup> Philip H. Howard, esq., M.P. for Carlisle, to whose learning, research, and unwearied kindness, I have been deeply indebted in the course of this work.

<sup>2</sup> The original Latin stanzas are printed in Mr. Halliwell's introduction to his valuable edition of the Warkworth Chronicle, p. 20; published by the Camden Society.

<sup>3</sup> Warkworth Chronicle, p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> MSS. London Chron. Bibl. Cotton. Vitell, A. xvi. fol. 133.

<sup>5</sup> Warkworth, p. 21. Habington. Fabyan. Croyland Chron.

guarded by soldiers from Calais, "and so, without singing or saying," says the chronicler, "conveyed up the dark waters of the Thames at midnight, to his silent internment at Chertsey Abbey, where it was long pretended that miracles were performed at his tomb."<sup>1</sup>

Whether the widowed Margaret was, from her doleful lodgings in the Tower, a spectator of the removal of the remains of her hapless lord, is not recorded: but her extreme anxiety to possess them, may be gathered from a curious document among the MSS. in the royal archives at Paris. Just before the melancholy period of her last utter desolation, death had been busy in the paternal house of Margaret of Anjou; her brother John of Calabria, his young promising heir, and her sister's husband, Ferry of Vaudemonte, and her natural sister, Blanche of Anjou, all died within a few weeks of each other. King René had not recovered from the stupor of despair in which he had been plunged by these repeated bereavements, when he received the intelligence of the direful calamities that had befallen his unhappy daughter Margaret, and for her sufferings he shed those tears which he had been unable to weep for his own. Under the influence of these feelings he wrote the following touching letter to Margaret, which she received in the midst of her agonies for the death of her husband and son.

"My child, may God help thee with his counsels, for rarely is the aid of man tendered in such reverse of fortune. When you can spare a thought from your own sufferings, think of mine; they are great, my daughter, yet would I console thee."<sup>2</sup>

The imprisonment of Queen Margaret was at first very rigorous, but it was, after a time, ameliorated through the compassionate influence of Edward's Queen, Elizabeth Woodville, who probably retained a grateful remembrance of the benefits she had formerly received from her royal mistress. Margaret was first removed to Windsor, and afterwards to Wallingford, where she seems to have been under the charge of the noble castellaine, Alice Chaucer, duchess-dowager of Suffolk, her old favourite; at least such we think is the inference to be drawn from this observation, in one of the Paston Letters, dated July 8th, 1471:—"And as for queen Margaret, I understand that she is removed from Windsor to Wallingford, nigh to Ewelme, my Lady Suffolk's place in Oxfordshire."<sup>3</sup>

Five marks a-week were allotted by Edward IV. for the maintenance of the unfortunate Margaret during her imprisonment in Wallingford Castle. Her tender-hearted father, King René, was unwearied in his

<sup>1</sup> Warkworth, p. 21. Habington. Fabyan. Croyland Chron.

<sup>2</sup> Vie de Roi René, by Villeneuve.

<sup>3</sup> Shakspeare, in his tragedy of Richard III., makes grand poetic use of the character of the captive Lancastrian queen, when he represents her roaming at large through the palaces of her foes, like an ill-omened sibyl, or domestic fiend, denouncing woe and desolation to the princes of the line of York, invoking the retribution of Heaven on the progeny of those who had made her childless, and exulting with frenzied joy in the calamities of the widowed Elizabeth Woodville, whom she is made to call, "Poor painted queen, vain flourish of my greatness!" But Margaret's broken heart had ceased to vibrate to the agonising pangs of remembrance and regret, before the death of her great enemy, Edward IV.

exertions for her emancipation, which was at length accomplished, at the sacrifice of his inheritance of Provence, which he ceded to Louis XI. at Lyons, in 1475, for half its value, that he might deliver his beloved child from captivity. Yolante and her son murmured a little at this loss, but they appear, nevertheless, fond of Margaret. The agreement between Edward IV. and Louis XI., for the ransom of Margaret of Anjou was finally settled, August 29th, 1475, while Edward was in France. Louis undertook to pay fifty thousand crowns for her liberation, at five instalments.<sup>1</sup> The first instalment of her ransom was paid to Edward's treasurer, lord John Howard, November 3d, the same year, and the bereaved and broken-hearted widow of the holy Henry, after five years' captivity, was conducted from her prison at Wallingford Castle to Sandwich. In her journey through Kent she was consigned to the care and hospitality of John Haute,<sup>2</sup> a squire of that county, strongly in the interests of the house of York, who attended her to Sandwich, where she embarked. Her retinue, when she landed in France, according to Prevost, consisted of three ladies and seven gentlemen; but these must have been sent by the King of France, since the miserable sum allotted to Haute for her travelling expenses allows for little attendance. The feelings may be imagined with which she took a last farewell of the English shores, where, thirty years before, she had landed in the pride and flush of youthful beauty, as its monarch's bride, and all the chivalry of the land thronged to meet and do her honour. Now it was treason even to shed a tear of pity for her sore afflictions, or to speak a word of comfort to her. Truly might she have said, "See if any sorrow be like unto my sorrow!"

She safely arrived at Dieppe, in the beginning of January, 1476. It was requisite, for the validity of the deeds of renunciation she had to sign, that she should be at liberty. Therefore, sir Thomas Montgomery took her to Rouen, and on the 22d resigned her to the French ambassadors; and on the 29th of January she signed a formal renunciation of all rights her marriage in England had given her.

There is something touching in the very simplicity of the Latin sentence with which the deed begins, that was wrung from the broken-hearted heroine, who had, through so many storms of adversity, defended the rights of her royal consort and son. While they remained in life, she would have died a thousand deaths, rather than relinquish even the most shadowy of their claims; but the dear ones were no more, and now—

"Ambition, pride, the rival names  
Of York and Lancaster,

With all their long-contested claims,  
What were they then to her?"

Passively, and almost as a matter of indifference, Margaret subscribed the instrument commencing, "Ego Margarita, olim in regno Anglia maritata," &c. "I, Margaret, formerly in England married, renounce all that I could pretend to in England by the conditions of my marriage, with all other things there, to Edward, now king of England."<sup>3</sup> This

<sup>1</sup> Rymer. and French Archives.

<sup>2</sup> Issue Rolls, Appendix, Edward IV

<sup>3</sup> Rymer, vol. xii. p. 21. Du Tillet, 145. Archives de France, 212.

deed did not afford her the title of queen, even in a retrospective view. She was simply Margaret, formerly married in England. At the same time she signed a renunciation of her reversionary rights on her father's territories to Louis XI.; but as there were several intermediate heirs, this was no great sacrifice.

Margaret intended to take Paris in her journey home, in order to thank Louis XI. for her liberation; but it did not suit that wily politician to receive her, and he sent a message advising her to make the best of her way to her father. The last spark of Margaret's high spirit was elicited at this discourtesy, and, declining the escort Louis XI. had prepared for her at Rouen, she set out on her long wintry journey through Normandy;—a resolution which had nearly occasioned the loss of her life.<sup>1</sup> After Normandy had been conquered by Henry V., he had planted some colonies of English settlers in various towns and villages; and one or two of these settlements still remained in a wretched state, being unable to emigrate to their mother country. Margaret, wholly unconscious of these circumstances, meant to rest for the night, after her first day's journey from Rouen, in a town containing many of these malcontents. Curiosity led a crowd of them to gaze upon her at the inn, but when the word passed among them, "that it was Margaret of Anjou returning from England to her father," murmurs arose; they declared "she had been the original cause of the English losing France, and, consequently, of all their misery, and that they would now take vengeance upon her." With these words they made a rush to seize her, but fortunately she had time to gain her apartment, while two English gentlemen, her attendants, held her assailants at bay with their drawn swords, till the French authorities of the town, hearing the uproar, interfered, and rescued the unhappy Margaret from this unexpected attack. She retraced her steps immediately to Rouen, and was glad to claim the protection she had before refused.

We now come to that era of Margaret's life in which a noble author of our times, lord Morpeth, in one exquisite line, describes her as,

"Anjou's lone matron in her father's hall."

Like Naomi, Margaret returned empty and desolate to her native land, but, not like her, attended by a fond and faithful daughter-in-law, for the unhappy widow of her son had been compelled to wed king Edward's brother, Richard of Gloucester—him whom public report had branded as the murderer of Henry VI.; and the idea of this alliance must have added a drop to the already overflowing cup of bitterness, of which the fallen queen had drunk so deeply.

The home to which her father welcomed Margaret was at that time at Reculée, about a league from Angers, on the river Mayence, where he had a castle that commanded a view of the town, with a beautiful garden, and a gallery of paintings and sculpture, which he took delight in adorning with his own paintings, and ornamented the walls of his garden with heraldic designs carved in marble.<sup>2</sup> It was in such pursuits as

<sup>1</sup> Prevost.

<sup>2</sup> Villeneuve.

these that René, like a true Provençal sovereign, sought forgetfulness of his afflictions. But Margaret's temperament was of too stormy a nature to admit of the slightest alleviation to her grief. Her whole time was spent in painfully retracing the direful scenes of her past life, and in passionate regrets for the bereavements she had undergone. The canker-worm that was perpetually busy within, at length made its ravages outwardly visible on her person, and effected a fearful change in her appearance. The agonies and agitation she had undergone turned the whole mass of her blood; her eyes, once so brilliant and expressive, became hollow, dim, and perpetually inflamed, from excessive weeping; and her skin was disfigured with a dry, scaly leprosy, which transformed this princess, who had been celebrated as the most beautiful in the world, into a spectacle of horror.<sup>1</sup>

Villeneuve says, Margaret seldom left her retreat at Reculée, with the exception of one or two visits to the court of Louis XI. Another modern French historian mentions her, as the person who kept alive the interests of the Lancastrian party, for her kinsman, the young earl of Richmond, of whom Henry VI. had prophesied "that he should one day wear the crown of England." But the generally received opinion is, that she, after her return to her own country, lived in the deepest seclusion.

A Burgundian poet of her own times, Georges Chastelain,<sup>2</sup> wrote a poem called the "Temple of Ruined Greatness," in which Margaret of Anjou is greatly celebrated. A little before his death, king René composed two beautiful canticles, on the heroic actions of his beloved daughter, queen Margaret.<sup>3</sup> This accomplished prince died in the year 1480. By his will, which is preserved among the MSS. in the Bibliothèque du Roi, René bequeathed "one thousand crowns in gold to his daughter Margaret, queen of England, and, if she remains in a state of widowhood, an annuity of two thousand livres, and the château of Queniez for her abode." He wrote a letter on his death-bed to Louis XI., earnestly recommending to his care his daughter Margaret and his widow.<sup>4</sup>

After the death of king René,<sup>5</sup> Margaret sold any reversionary rights which the death of her elder sister and her children might give her to the duchies of Lorraine, Anjou, Maine, Provence, and Bar, to Louis XI., for a pension of six thousand livres. She executed this deed on the

<sup>1</sup> Villeneuve.

<sup>2</sup> King-at-arms of the order of the Golden Fleece.

<sup>3</sup> Vie de Roi René d'Anjou. <sup>4</sup> Villeneuve. Monstrelet. Bibliothèque du Roi.

<sup>5</sup> Through the kindness of Mr. Beltz, the Lancaster herald, I have been favoured with a copy of Margaret's acknowledgment for the first payment she received of this pension, with a fac-simile of her signature, which is extremely rare.

"Nous Marguerite Roïne d'Angleterre confessons avoir eu et receu de Maistro Denis de Bidant, notaire et secrétaire de monseigneur le roy, et receveur-general de ses finan., la somme de six mil livres tourn., à nous ordonné par mon seigneur pour nre. pension de ceste pite année commencée le premier jour d'Octobre dernier passé, de laquelle somme de vi<sup>m</sup> lr. nous nous tenons pour contente et bien payée et en avons quitte et quittons mon seign' le roy le dit receveur-gñal et tous autres. En tesmoing de ce nous avons signé ces pites. de nre. main et

19th day of November, 1480, in the great hall of the castle of Reculée, where in her girlhood she had received the ambassadors of England, who came to solicit her virgin hand for their sovereign. This pension was so unpunctually paid by Louis, that if Margaret had no other resource, she would have been greatly inconvenienced, especially as many of the ruined Lancastrian exiles subsisted on her bounty. King René, with his last breath, had consigned her to the care of an old and faithful officer of his household, Francis Vignolles, lord of Moraens, who had shared all his struggles. This brave soldier took the fallen queen to his own home, the château of Damprière, near Saumur. The last tie that bound Margaret to the world was severed by the death of her father, and she wished to end her days in profound retirement. Her efforts to obtain the bodies of her murdered husband and son were ineffectual; but, till the last day of her life, she employed some faithful ecclesiastics in England, to perform at the humble graves of her loved and lost ones, those offices deemed needful for the repose of their souls.

On her death-bed she divided among her faithful attendants the few valuables that remained from the wreck of her fortunes; and, worn out with the pressure of her sore afflictions of mind and body, she closed her troublous pilgrimage at the château of Damprière, August 25th, in the fifty-first year of her age.<sup>1</sup>

She was buried in the cathedral of Angers, in the same tomb with her royal parents, without epitaph or inscription, or any other memorial, excepting her portrait, painted on glass in a window of the cathedral. A tribute of respect was for centuries paid to her memory by the chapter of St. Maurice, who, annually, on the feast of All Saints, after the vespers for the dead, made a semicircular procession round her grave, singing a *subvenite*.<sup>2</sup> This was continued till the French Revolution.

Margaret's elder sister, Yolante, survived her two years; she had a beautiful daughter, called Margaret of Anjou the younger. Maria Louisa, Napoleon's empress, possessed the breviary of this princess, in which there is one sentence supposed to have been written by the once beautiful, powerful, and admired Margaret, queen of England, her aunt:—

“ Vanité des vanities, tout la vanité.”<sup>3</sup>

fait scellée du seel de nos armes le douziesme jour de Fevrier, l'an mil cccc quatre vingts et ung.

The above autograph acquittance is in the Register or Collection entitled *Sceau x*, vol. v. p. 183, in the MSS. Royal Lib. Paris.

<sup>1</sup> Miss Costello, the accomplished author of “the Boccages and the Vines,” declares she has visited the château, which is of fine architecture, and is at present in complete preservation.

<sup>2</sup> Villeneuve.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



# ELIZABETH WOODVILLE,

## QUEEN OF EDWARD IV.

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### CHAPTER I.

Unequal royal marriages—Parents of Elizabeth Woodville—She is maid of honour to Margaret of Anjou—Duke of York writes to Elizabeth—Earl of Warwick writes to her for his friend—She rejects sir Hugh Johns—Accepts the heir of lord Ferrers, John Gray—Bradgate—Elizabeth's sons—Sir John Gray killed at St. Albans—Elizabeth's destitute widowhood—Captivates Edward IV.—Their meetings—The queen's oak—Private marriage with the king—Opposition of the king's mother—Recognition of Elizabeth as queen—Her sisters—Her brother, Anthony Woodville—Scene at her court—Coronation—Enmity of queen Isabella of Castille—Elizabeth endows Queen's College—Birth of eldest daughter—Warwick's enmity to the queen—Portrait of the queen—Her influence—Her father and eldest brother murdered—Her mother accused of witchcraft—Revolution—Edward IV.'s flight—Queen and her mother at the Tower—Flight to sanctuary—Birth of prince Edward—Queen's distress—Her humble friends—Return of Edward IV.—Queen leaves sanctuary for the Tower—Her brother Anthony defends the Tower—Re-establishment of the house of York—The queen's friends rewarded.

THE fifteenth century is, above all other eras, remarkable for unequal marriages made by persons of royal station. Then, for the first time since the reigns of our Plantagenets commenced, was broken that high and stately etiquette of the middle ages, which forbade king or kaiser to mate with partners below the rank of princesses. In that century, the marriage of the handsome Edward IV. with an English gentlewoman caused as much astonishment at the wondrous archery of Dan Cupid, as was fabled of old—

"When he shot so true  
That king Cophetua wed the beggar maid."

But the mother of Elizabeth Woodville had occasioned scarcely less wonder in her day, when, following the example of her sister-in-law, queen Katherine, she, a princess of Luxemburgh by birth, and as the widow of the warlike duke of Bedford, the third lady of the realm, chose for her second helpmate, another squire of Henry V., Richard Woodville, who was considered the handsomest man in England.

After the death of Henry V., Woodville entered the service of the duke of Bedford, on whose death he was employed to escort the young widow, who was but seventeen, to England, where she was dowered on the royal demesnes.

The duchess of Bedford's marriage was kept secret full five years. Its discovery took place about the same time as that of the queen with Owen Tudor; and certainly the duke of Gloucester (though his own love-affairs were quite as astounding to the nation) must have thought his two sisters-in-law had gone distracted with love for squires of low degree. What scandals, what court gossip, must have circulated throughout England in the year of grace, 1436!

The duchess's dower was forfeited in consequence of her marriage with Woodville, but restored on her humble supplication to parliament, through the influence of her husband's patron, cardinal Beaufort.<sup>1</sup> Grafton Castle was the principal residence of the duchess. Probably Elizabeth Woodville was born there, about 1431, some years before the discovery of her parent's marriage.<sup>2</sup> Her father, sir Richard Woodville, was one of the English commanders at Rouen, under the duke of York, during that prince's regency.<sup>3</sup>

After the death of the unfortunate queen-mother Katherine, and that of the queen-dowager Joanna, the duchess of Bedford became for some time, in rank, the first lady in England, and always possessed a certain degree of influence in consequence. Her husband was in the retinue sent to escort Margaret of Anjou to England;<sup>4</sup> he was afterwards rapidly advanced at court, made baron, and finally earl of Rivers; and the duchess of Bedford became a great favourite of the young queen. The duchess was still second lady in England, yet her rank was many degrees more exalted than her fortune; therefore, as her children grew up, she was glad to provide for them at the court of her friend, queen Margaret. Her eldest daughter, the beautiful Elizabeth Woodville, was appointed maid of honour<sup>5</sup> to that queen, little deeming that she was one day to fill her place on the English throne. While yet in attendance on her royal mistress, she captured the heart of a brave knight, Sir Hugh Johns, a great favourite of Richard duke of York. Sir Hugh had nothing in the world wherewithal to endow the fair Woodville, but a sword whose temper had been proved in many a battle in France; he was, moreover, a timid wooer, and, very impolitically, deputed others to make to the beautiful maid of honour the declaration of love which he wanted courage to speak himself.

Richard duke of York was protector of England when he thus, in regal style,<sup>6</sup> recommended his landless vassal to the love of her who was one day to share the diadem of his heir.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Richard Woodville was his partisan, and held out the Tower for him against Humphrey duke of Gloucester.

<sup>2</sup> All history affirms that Elizabeth was thirty-three in 1464.

<sup>3</sup> Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 114. New edition.

<sup>4</sup> Breknoke Computus.

<sup>5</sup> Parliamentary History, vol. ii. p. 345. Hall's Chronicle, p. 365. Bucke and Prevost likewise dwell on this circumstance.

<sup>6</sup> Bib. Reg. 17, b. xlvii. fol. 164, vol. clxv. &c. This and the following letters, which are not yet named in the catalogue of the British Museum, were discovered by the indefatigable research of Mr. Halliwell, and with great liberality communicated to the author. Their biographical value every one will perceive.

"To dame Elizabeth Wodeville.<sup>1</sup>

"Right trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well.

"For as much as we are credibly informed that our right hearty and well-beloved knight, sir Hugh John, for the great womanhood and gentleness approved and known in your person—ye being sole (single) and to be married—his heart wholly have; wherewith we are right well pleased. How be it of your disposition towards him in that behalf, as yet is to us unknown. We therefore, as for the faith true and good lordship we owe unto him at this time (and so will continue), we desire and heartily pray ye will on your part be to him well-willed to the performing of this our writing and his desire. Where in ye shall do not only to our pleasure, but, we doubt not, to your own great weal and worship in time to come; certifying, that if ye fulfil our intent in this matter, we will and shall be to him and you such lord as shall be to both your great weal and worship, by the grace of God, who preeede and guide you in all heavenly felicity and welfare!

"Written by RICHARD DUKE OF YORK."

Even if Elizabeth's heart had responded to this earnest appeal of her lover's princely master, yet she was too slenderly gifted by fortune to venture on a mere love-match. She probably demurred on this point, and avoided returning a decisive answer; for her delay elicited a second letter, on the subject of sir Hugh's great love and affection. This time it was from the pen of the famous Richard Neville, earl of Warwick. It is not written as if by a stranger to a stranger; at the same time, by his promises of "good lordship" (patronage) to Elizabeth and her lover, it is very evident he considers himself as the superior of both.

"To dame Elizabeth Wodeville.

"Worshipful and well-beloved. I greet you well, and forasmuch my right well-beloved sir Hugh John, knight (which now late was with you unto his full great joy, and had great cheer, as he saith, whereof I thank you), hath informed me how that he hath, for the great love and affection that he hath unto your person, as well for the great sadness (seriousness) and wisdom that he hath found and proved in you at that time, as for your great and praised beauty, and womanly demeaning, he desireth with all haste to do you worship by way of marriage, before any other creature living (as he saith). I (considering his said desire, and the great worship that he had, which was made knight at Jerusalem, and after his coming home, for the great wisdom and manhood that he was renowned of, was made knight-marshall of France, and after knight-marshall of England<sup>2</sup> unto his great worship, with other his great and many virtues and desert, and also the good and notable service that he hath done and daily doth to me) write unto you at this time, and pray you *effectuously* that ye will the rather (at this my request and prayer) to condescend and apply you unto his said lawful and honest desire, wherein ye shall not only *purvey* (provide) right notably for yourself unto your weal and worship (*profit and honour*) in time to come, as I hereby trust, but also cause me to show unto you such good lordship (*patronage*) as ye by reason of it shall hold you content and pleased, with the

<sup>1</sup> The name is spelled Wodeville, in the MS. letters, which comes very near the popular mode here adopted; one of the addresses is spelled Wodehill, but this is a mere slip of the pen, as it is evident that both are addressed to the same person.

<sup>2</sup> This, according to sir Hugh's monument, was in 1451; therefore, these letters, which are dateless, must have been written after that year. A fact which proves that Elizabeth was single then.

grace of God ; which everlastingly have you in his bliss, protection, and governance !

"Written by the EARL OF WARWICK."

No one can read this epistle without the conviction that the great earl of Warwick had some ambition to become a match-maker as well as a king-maker. Nevertheless, sir Hugh met with the usual fate of a lover who has not the spirit to speak for himself, and deposes his wooing to the agency of friends—he was rejected by the fair Elizabeth. He married a nameless damsel, and in course of time died possessor of a single manor.<sup>1</sup> A far different destiny was reserved for the lady of his love.

The foregoing letters could not have been written till 1452 ; Elizabeth was that year twenty-one, and she was then, as Richard of York says, "sole and to be married"—that is, she was single and disengaged ; a remarkable crisis of her life, when in her maiden beauty she was eagerly wooed by the avowed partisans of "the pale and of the purple Rose." Some worldly considerations, besides her duty to her royal mistress, queen Margaret, seem to have led Elizabeth to reject the Yorkist partisan, sir Hugh Johnes, and accept the hand of the heir of the illustrious and wealthy lordship of Ferrers of Groby, a cavalier, firmly attached to the house of Lancaster.

The time is not distinctly specified of the marriage of Elizabeth Woodville with John Gray ; it probably took place soon after her rejection of the Yorkist champion. This wedlock was certainly a great match for the penniless maid of honour ; for it was equal to several of the alliances of the Plantagenet princesses. John Gray was son and heir to lord Ferrers of Groby, possessor of the ancient domain of Bradgate, which was hereafter to derive such lustre from being the native place of Elizabeth's descendant, lady Jane Gray. Bradgate was Gray's patrimony, by reason of his descent from the proudest blood of our Norman nobility.<sup>2</sup>

Tradition declares this was a most happy marriage,<sup>3</sup> although Eliza-

<sup>1</sup> See the copy of the monumental brass of sir Hugh Johnes, in sir R. C. Hoare's edition of the *Itinerary of Giraldus Cambrensis*. He was lord of the manor of Landymo, which it is expressly affirmed was given him by John the Good, duke of Norfolk ; his bravery, and the orders of knighthood he won, are detailed nearly in the words of the earl of Warwick, but the monument adds dates which throw some light on the above correspondence. It declares his wife was Maud, but mentions no surname or descent. Sir Hugh Johnes was the father of five children. His name appears as a second in one of those legalised duels which heralded the wars of the Roses. In the year 1553, he was second on appeal of battle for Lyalton, who accused John Norris of treason.—*Privy Council*, vol. vi. p. 129.

<sup>2</sup> See Dugdale, collated by Edward Brayley, with other genealogical proofs (*Historical Perambulator*). Bradgate had been part of the inheritance of Petronilla, daughter of Grantmesnil, one of the conqueror's great tenants in *capite*, it descended from her through a co-heiress of Blanchmains, earl of Leicester, to the line of Ferrers of Groby, and by the heiress of the Ferrers to sir Edward Gray, father to the husband of Elizabeth. It was the chance of war alone that made Elizabeth a poor suppliant widow.

<sup>3</sup> There is a well-known and amusing paper, called the "*Journal of Elizabeth Woodville*," when courted by sir John Gray, which makes her fill a very par-

beth and Gray must have been frequently separated by the ferocious contest between York and Lancaster, which commenced directly after their union.

An adventure connected with the struggle for the crown, in the last stormy years of Henry VI.'s reign, placed young Edward Plantagenet, then earl of March, and earl Rivers, the father of Elizabeth, in extraordinary collision. The earl of Rivers, and his son sir Anthony, ardent partisans of Lancaster, were fitting out ships at Sandwich, by orders of queen Margaret, in order to join the duke of Somerset's naval armament in 1458. At this time sir John Dinham, a naval captain in the service of Warwick, made a descent at Sandwich, and, surprising the earl of Rivers and his son in their beds, carried them prisoners to Calais. How they were received there, William Paston<sup>1</sup> shall tell, in one of his letters to a Norfolk knight, his brother:—

"To my right worshipful brother be this letter delivered. As for tidings, the lord Rivers was brought to Calais, and before the lords by night, with eight-score torches, and there my lord of Salisbury rated him, calling him 'Knave's son, that such as *he* should be so rude as to call him and these other lords traitors, for they should be found the king's true liegemen, when such as *he* should be found a traitor!' And my lord of Warwick rated him, and said, 'His father was but a little squire brought up with king Henry V., and since made himself by marriage, and also made a lord, and it was not *his* part to have held such language to those who were of king's blood!' And my lord March rated him likewise. And sir Antony Woodville was likewise rated for his language, by all the three lords."

All this rating seems to have been the dénouement of some old quarrel at court, with the earl of March. As the duke of York had not yet claimed the crown, but only the right of succession, his son dared not take the lives of Henry VI.'s subjects in cold blood; therefore the Woodvilles escaped with the payment of ransom.

Edward, lord Ferrers, the father-in-law of Elizabeth, died December 18th, 1457. The distraction of the times was such, that her husband had no opportunity of taking his place, as lord Ferrers, in the house of peers.<sup>2</sup> He was then twenty-five, handsome, brave, and manly, the leader of queen Margaret's cavalry, and an ardent and faithful partisan of her cause. Elizabeth had brought her husband two sons; one, born just before the death of lord Ferrers, was named Thomas, the other's name was Richard. These children were born at Bradgate, which, during the lifetime of her lord, was the home of Elizabeth.

There is reason to believe that Elizabeth followed her lord in the campaign which queen Margaret made in 1460. Prevost states, that previously to the second battle of St. Albans, queen Margaret persuaded Elizabeth to visit Warwick's camp, under pretence of requesting some little favour or assistance for herself, as it was known that the stout earl was very partial to her; but in reality Elizabeth acted as a

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toral situation as a country lady at Grafton; it is a palpable fabrication, and therefore not to be quoted here.

<sup>1</sup> Paston Papers. Hall, Holingshed, and Rapin, mention the incident.

<sup>2</sup> Dugdale.

spy for her royal mistress. Elizabeth's husband, Gray, lord Ferrers commanded the cavalry of Queen Margaret, during that furious charge which won the day for Lancaster, at the second battle of St. Albans. The red Rose was for a brief space triumphant, but the young victorious leader died of his wounds the 28th of February, 1461, and his beautiful Elizabeth was left desolate. Fortunately, her mother was near the army, if not with queen Margaret.<sup>1</sup> Several chroniclers declare that Henry VI. knighted Elizabeth's husband at the village of Colney; therefore Gray must have survived the battle.

A rancour so deep and deadly was cherished against the memory of Elizabeth's gallant husband, that his harmless infants, the eldest not more than four years old, were deprived of their inheritance of Bradgate, and Elizabeth herself remained a mourning and destitute widow in her native bowers of Grafton, at the accession of Edward IV.

The mother of Elizabeth was a *diplomatiste* of most consummate ability; insomuch that the common people attributed her influence over the minds of men to sorcery. The manner in which she reconciled herself to young Edward, when she had so lately been aiding and abetting queen Margaret, after the stormy scene that had occurred between that prince and her lord and son at Calais, and after her son-in-law had by his valour, almost turned the scale of victory against the house of York, is really unaccountable; but the effect of her influence remains in no equivocal terms, on the Issue Rolls of Edward's exchequer. In the first year of his reign there is an entry declaring "that the king affectionately considering the state and benefit of Jaquetta, duchess of Bedford, and lord Rivers, of his especial grace, not only pays her the annual stipend of her dower, three hundred and thirty-three marks, four shillings, and a third of a farthing," but actually pays 100*l.* in advance; a strong proof that Edward was on good terms with the father and mother of Elizabeth, three years before he was ostensibly the lover of their daughter.

Is it possible that the fair widow of sir John Gray first became acquainted with the victor, in the depths of her distress for the loss of her husband, and that Edward's sudden passion for her induced his extraordinary profession of affection for her mother and father, who were, till the death of sir John Gray, such stanch Lancastrians? If this singular entry in the Issue Rolls may be permitted to support this surmise, then did the acquaintance of Elizabeth and Edward commence two or three years earlier than all former histories have given reason to suppose. Whatever be the date of this celebrated triumph of love over sovereignty, tradition points out precisely the scene of the first interview between the lovely widow and the youthful king. Elizabeth waylaid Edward IV. in the forest of Whittlebury, a royal chase, when he was hunting in the neighbourhood of her mother's dower-castle at Grafton.

<sup>1</sup> Wethampstede. The abbot of St. Albans petitioned the duchess of Bedford to intercede with that queen to prevent her northern troops from firing his stately abbey; a proof that the mother of Elizabeth was near queen Margaret.

<sup>2</sup> Issue Rolls, Appendix, 480.

There she waited for him, under a noble tree, still known in the local traditions of Northamptonshire by the name of the Queen's Oak.<sup>1</sup> Under the shelter of its branches the fair widow addressed the young monarch, holding her fatherless boys by the hands; and when Edward paused to listen to her, she threw herself at his feet, and pleaded earnestly for the restoration of Bradgate, the inheritance of her children. Her downcast looks and mournful beauty not only gained her suit, but the heart of the conqueror.

The Queen's Oak, which was the scene of more than one interview between the beautiful Elizabeth and the enamoured Edward, stands in the direct track of communication between Grafton Castle and Whittlebury Forest; it now rears its hollow trunk, a venerable witness of one of the most romantic facts that history records. If the friendly entry in the Issue Rolls be taken for data of Elizabeth's acquaintance with Edward IV., he became acquainted with her soon after the battle of Towton; thus she was little more than twenty-nine<sup>2</sup> when she first captivated him, and her delicate and modest beauty was not yet impaired by time.

Edward tried every art, to induce Elizabeth to become his own on other terms than as the sharer of his regal dignity; the beautiful widow made this memorable reply: "My liege, I know I am not good enough to be your queen, but I am far too good to become your mistress."

She then left him to settle the question in his own breast; for she knew he had betrayed others, whose hearts had deceived them into allowing him undue liberties. Her affections, in all probability, still clung to the memory of the husband of her youth, and her indifference increased the love of the young king. The struggle ended in his offering her marriage. The duchess of Bedford, when she found matters had proceeded to this climax, took the management of the affair, and, pretending to conceal the whole from the knowledge of her husband, arranged the private espousals of her daughter and the king. In the quaint words of Fabyan, the marriage is thus described:—"In most secret manner, upon the 1st of May, 1464, king Edward spoused Elizabeth, late being wife of sir John Gray. Which spousales were solemnised early in the morning at the town called Grafton, near to Stoney Stratford. At which marriage was none present but the spouse (Edward), the spousesse (Elizabeth), the duchess of Bedford, her mother, the priest, and two gentlewomen, and a young man who helped the priest to sing.<sup>3</sup> After the spousailles the king again rode to Stoney

<sup>1</sup> Baker's Northamptonshire.

<sup>2</sup> Edward, according to his own account in the *Fragment Chronicle* at the end of Sprott (Hearne's edition), was born at Rouen, during his father's regency, 1440.

<sup>3</sup> The *Fragment Chronicle*, printed by Hearne, at the end of the *Sprott Chronicle*, is written by a person who appears to have been a secretary to Thomas duke of Norfolk, the second duke of the Howard line. The author of this remarkable history solemnly calls on duke Thomas as witness of these events. He says many circumstances were from Edward IV.'s own mouth. The narrative is very easy and perspicuous. This *Chronicle* dates the marriage of Elizabeth Woodville much earlier than other authors, and adds to the date he gives,

Stratford, as if he had been hunting, and then returned at night. And within a day or two the king sent to lord Rivers, father to his bride, saying that he would come and lodge with him for a season, when he was received with all due honour, and tarried there four days, when Elizabeth visited him by night so secretly, that none but her mother knew of it. And so the marriage was kept secret till it needs must be discovered, because of princesses offered as wives to the king. There was some obloquy attending this marriage—how that the king was enchanted by the duchess of Bedford, or he would have refused to acknowledge her daughter.”

In the course of the summer of 1464, the king's marriage was discussed at court, though he yet delayed its public acknowledgment. His great desire was to prove to his peers that Elizabeth, being a descendant of the house of Luxemburg,<sup>1</sup> was as worthy to share his throne as her mother was to marry the brother of Henry V. With this idea he sent an embassy to his ally Charles count of Charolois, asking him to induce some of the princes of the house of Luxemburg to visit England, and claim kindred with his wife. From the remarks Monstrelet makes on this head, it may be gathered that the princes of Luxemburg had wholly forgotten and lost sight of the mother of Elizabeth. It is certain that they had been incensed at her marriage with Richard Woodville, for he says, “Richard was the handsomest man in all England, and Jaquetta was an exceedingly handsome gentlewoman; yet they never could visit the continent, or her brother count Louis St. Pol would have slain them both.” Jaquetta was gradually forgotten, till the extraordinary advancement of Elizabeth, and the message of her royal lord, revived the remembrance of her Flemish relatives, and the count of Charolois sent word “that the coronation of Elizabeth would be attended by her kindred.”

Of all persons, the marriage of Elizabeth gave the most offence to the mother of Edward IV. This lady, who had assumed all the state of a queen, before the fall of her husband, Richard, duke of York, at Wake-

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1463, the words, “in the *third year of Edward IV.*,” which puts us out of doubt of accident regarding a slip of the pen, in the date. He gives the important fact, “The priest that wedded Elizabeth and Edward lies buried before the altar at the church of the Minors, at London Bridge.” He implies that the passion of Edward had long preceded his marriage with the fair widow, whom he wedded because she was the most virtuous woman he found; likewise because foreign princesses would not marry him, fearing the restoration of the house of Lancaster.

<sup>1</sup> The house of Luxemburg was coeval with the Frankish monarchy, and the head of the family was on the imperial throne of Germany. The princesses of this line were remarkable for the charms of their persons and manners. These fascinations, it was fabled, were inherited from Melusina, a beautiful water nymph of the Rhine, who, it is pretended, was the ancestress of the family. The serpent of Melusina was by some of the Luxemburg princes borne as a device on their shields. Perhaps this tradition gave rise to the accusation of sorcery against the duchess of Bedford; however, the pretended fairy Melusina herself could scarcely have been more successful in bewitching the minds of men than were Jaquetta and her daughter, Elizabeth Woodville.



field, was infuriated at having to give place to the daughter of a man who commenced his career as a poor squire, of ordinary lineage. Among other arguments against her son's wedlock was, that the fact of Elizabeth being a widow ought to prevent her marriage with a king, since the sovereignty would be dishonoured by such bigamy. The king merrily answered, "She is, indeed, a widow, and hath children, and by God's blessed Lady, I, who am but a bachelor, have some too. Madame, my mother, I pray you be content, for as to the bigamy, the priest may lay it in my way if ever I come to take orders, for I understand it is forbidden to a priest, but I never wist it was to a king."<sup>1</sup>

This is the version king Edward's courtiers chose to give of the conversation; but there is little doubt the duchess of York<sup>2</sup> reproached her son with the breach of his marriage-contract with Elizabeth Lucy, the predecessor of Elizabeth Woodville in the affections of Edward. Bitterly was this perfidy afterwards visited, on the innocent family of the royal seducer. Edward was likewise supposed to be married to lady Eleanor Butler, the daughter of the great earl of Shrewsbury. Possibly this was a betrothment entered into in Edward's childhood.

It was at the ancient palace of Reading, on Michaelmas Day, 1464, that Edward IV. finally declared Elizabeth to be his wedded wife. A council of the peers was convoked there, when the king took Elizabeth by the hand, and presented her to them as his rightful queen. She was then led by the young duke of Clarence, in solemn pomp, to the stately abbey-church of Reading, where she was publicly declared queen, and, having made her offering, received the congratulations of all the nobility assembled there, among whom, some authorities declare, was the earl of Warwick.<sup>3</sup>

A portrait of Elizabeth Woodville, to be found in a fine illumination in the Harleian Collection in the British Museum, represents her in the costume in which she first appeared as a royal bride, at Reading. The manner in which Elizabeth's hair is arranged proves that the limning

<sup>1</sup> Camden's Remains.

<sup>2</sup> Cicely of Raby, the youngest daughter of Ralph Neville, earl of Westmoreland, by Joanna Beaufort, daughter of John of Gaunt. Cicely married Richard duke of York, in whom centred the Mortimer title to the throne; he was the ward of her father and mother; by him she had Edward IV. and a large family. The duchess of York was remarkable for her beauty, and still more so for her indomitable pride. In the north she was called the Rose of Raby, but in the neighbourhood of her baronial residence of Fotheringay Castle the common people called her "Proud Cis." She had a throne-room at Fotheringay, where she gave receptions with the state of a queen. Curious portraits in painted glass of Cicely and her husband are still to be seen in the south window of the chancel of Penrith Church. They have been engraved in Mr. Jefferson's valuable *History and Antiquities of Leath Ward, Cumberland*. Cicely is decorated with a garland of gems, and gives the idea of a very handsome woman in the decline of life. Her reputation has not descended to posterity unscathed. Philip de Comines scandalises her with derelictions from her duty, during the duke of York's regency in France. Hence Charles the Bold and Louis XI. always, in private, called the handsome Edward IV. "the son of an archer."

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Lingard rejects the story of Warwick's embassy for the hand of Bona of Savoy at the time of Edward's marriage.

was drawn while she was a bride. She wears a lofty crown, of peculiar richness, the numerous points of which are finished by fleurs-de-lis; her hair, with the exception of a small ring in the middle of the forehead, is streaming down her back, and reaches to her knees. It is pale yellow, and its extreme profusion agrees with the description of chroniclers; she is very fair, her eyelids are cast down with an affected look of modesty, which gives a sinister expression to her face. Her attire is regal; the material of her dress is a splendid kind of gold brocade, in stripes called baudekins, which was solely appropriated to the royal family: it is garter blue, of a column pattern, alternately with gold; the sleeves are tight, the boddice close fitting, with robings of ermine turned back over the shoulders: it is girded round the waist with a crimson scarf, something like an officer's sash. The skirt of the dress is full, with a broad ermine border, and finishes with a train many yards in length; this is partly held up by the queen, while the extremity is folded round the arms of a train-bearer, who is probably one of Elizabeth's sisters. A rich blue satin petticoat is seen beneath the dress, and the shoes are of the pointed form, called sometimes cracows, and sometimes pignacies. The queen wears a pearl necklace strung in an elaborate pattern, called a device.

Although Edward IV. was at times notoriously unfaithful to his queen, and other women occasionally seduced him from her, yet over his mind Elizabeth, from first to last, certainly held potent sway—an influence most dangerous in the hands of a woman who possessed more cunning than firmness, more skill in concocting a diplomatic intrigue than power to form a rational resolve. She was ever successful in carrying her own purposes, but she had seldom a wise or good end in view; the advancement of her own relatives, and the depreciation of her husband's friends and family, were her chief objects. Elizabeth gained her own way with her husband, by an assumption of the deepest humility; her words were soft and caressing, her glances timid.

The acknowledgment of Elizabeth's marriage was followed by a series of the most brilliant fêtes and tournaments that had been witnessed in England, since the establishment of the order of the Garter by Edward III. At these scenes Elizabeth presided, surrounded by a virgin train of lovely sisters, who were the cynosure of the eyes of the unmarried baronage of England. Although these nobles had suffered all the portionless daughters of the duchess of Bedford to reach ages from twenty to thirty unwooded and unwedded, yet they now found that no beauties were comparable to the sisters of her whom the king delighted to honour.

The exaltation of so many fair rivals did not add to the new-made queen's popularity with the female nobility of England; while her heroic brother, Anthony Woodville, by his beauty, his learning, and his prowess in the tilt-yard, with better reason, raised considerable envy among his own sex.

Elizabeth incensed the ancient nobility, by the activity with which she mated her numerous tribe among the greatest heirs and heiresses of

the realm.<sup>1</sup> Anthony Woodville married the orphan of lord Scales, the richest heiress in the kingdom, whom the duchess of York designed for her son Clarence.<sup>2</sup> Neither infantine juvenility, nor the extreme of dotage, seems to have been objected by the Woodvilles, if there were a superfluity of the goods of this world; for the queen's eldest brother, a fine young man, wedded, for her great jointure, Katharine, the dowager-duchess of Norfolk, then in her eightieth year,—“a diabolical marriage,”<sup>3</sup> wrathfully exclaims William of Worcester.

Soon after the queen had made the match between the young heiress of Scales and her brother Anthony, the ladies of England chose that gallant knight, to sustain the honour of his country, at the tournament they expected would be proclaimed in celebration of Elizabeth's coronation. On the Wednesday before Easter-day, 1465, on the return of sir Anthony Woodville from high mass, with his royal sister, at the chapel of the Shene Palace, a bevy of her ladies surrounded him, and by the presentation of a golden knee-band figured with SS, and ornamented with a Forget-me-not, gave some mystical intimation that he was expected to remember his knightly devoir, of high emprise, at the coronation of his sister. The antagonist he selected was the most renowned champion of Europe, being count de la Roche, illegitimate son of Philip of Burgundy, and the constant companion of all the rash enterprises of his brother Charles the Bold, whether in field or tourney. To this opponent Anthony Woodville, who had now adopted the title of lord Scales in right of his lady, thus wrote,<sup>4</sup> from the palace of Shene.

“Truth it is, that the Wednesday next before the solemn and devout resurrection of our blessed Saviour and Redeemer, for certain causes I drew me near toward the queen of England and of France, my sovereign lady, to whom I am right humble servant, subject, and brother. And as I spoke to her highness on my knees, my bonnet off my head, according to my duty, I know not how it happened, but all the ladies of her court environed me about, and anon I took heed that they had tied above my left knee a band of gold, garnished with precious stones which formed a letter (it was a collar of SS, meaning Souvenance, or remembrance), which, when I perceived, truth to say, it came nigher to my heart

<sup>1</sup> Sir John Paston's mother advises him “to marry right nigh to the queen's blood, so that he could get his land again”—a popular proof of the great favouritism of her family. Margaret Woodville, the October after Elizabeth was acknowledged queen, married lord Maltravers, heir of the earl of Arundel. Soon afterwards, Henry duke of Buckingham married Katharine Woodville; Jacquetta married the earl of Essex, and the fourth sister married the heir of the earl of Kent. In the next September, the queen's sister Mary married the heir of lord Herbert, and from this wedlock proceeded the first affront given to the earl of Warwick, for Herbert was promoted to some office which interfered with his interests.

<sup>2</sup> Some represent this lady as a child, others as a widow. She might in those days have been both.

<sup>3</sup> This alludes to an old English proverb on marriage, “That the marriage of a young woman and a young man is of God's making, as Adam and Eve; an old man and young woman, of Our Lady's making, as Mary and Joseph; but that of an old woman and a young man, is made by the author of evil.”

<sup>4</sup> Excerpta Hist. 186. The extract of this letter is, for the sake of brevity, limited to the passage in which the queen is a personal agent. The original is in French; it is of course translated into perspicuous orthography.

thau to my knee; and to this collar was hanging a noble Flower of Souvenance, enamelled, and in manner of emprise. And then one of the ladies said to me full sweetly, 'that I ought to take a step fitting for the time;' and then each of them withdrew demurely to their places. And I, all abashed at this adventure, rose up to go and thank them for their rich and honourable present, but when I took up my cap I found in it a letter written on vellum, and only closed and bound with a golden thread. Now I thought this letter contained the will of the ladies expressed in writing, and that I should know the adventure which the Flower of Souvenance was given me to undertake. Then humbly did I thank the queen, who of her grace had permitted such honour to be done me in her noble presence, and especially did I thank the ladies for their noble present. I went forthwith to the king of England, my sovereign lord, to show him the emprise, and that he would give me leave and license to accomplish the contents of the said letter, to bring the adventure of the Flower of Souvenance to a conclusion."

King Edward broke the thread of gold; he read the articles of combat, and permitted the jousts;<sup>1</sup> then Woodville forwarded the articles of combat, and the enamelled jewel of Forget-me-not, to the count de la Roche, by a herald, requesting him "to touch the flower<sup>2</sup> with his worthy and knightly hand, in token of his acceptance of the challenge;" the count did so, and expected to be one of the knights sent by Charles the Bold, to do honour to the coronation tournament of the queen.

The coronation of Elizabeth was appointed at Westminster Abbey, Whitsunday, the 26th of May. On Whitsun-eve the queen entered London from Eltham palace, the mayor and city authorities meeting her at the foot of Shooter's Hill, and conducting her through Southwark to the Tower. That morning Edward kept court at the Tower, where he knighted thirty-two persons, among whom were five judges and six citizens, and behaved with the utmost popularity, in order to obtain the favour of the citizens for his queen. She was carried through the city to her palace of Westminster, in a litter borne on long poles, like a sedan chair, supported by stately pacing steeds. The new-made knights all rode, on this occasion, in solemn procession before the queen's litter. She was crowned next day, with great solemnity, in Westminster Abbey, the young duke of Clarence officiating as high steward. After the coronation, the queen sat in state at a grand banquet in Westminster Hall, where the bishop of Rochester, who sang the mass at her consecration, took his place at the king's right hand, and the duke of Buckingham (now the king's brother-in-law, by reason of his wedlock with Katharine Woodville) sat at his left. Charles the Bold fulfilled his promise of sending to England a sovereign prince of Elizabeth's kin, to convince the Londoners that Edward had taken to himself a helpmate of princely alliances. Count James of St. Pol, uncle to the duchess of Bedford, landed at Greenwich some days before the coronation, and brought with him, not the champion of Burgundy, challenged by the queen's brother,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Excerpta, p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> No tournament, until the Englintoun tournament, was ever held without the express license of the sovereign; and very heavy penalties (if we mistake not) still exist against such proceedings, which are considered tantamount to "levying war in the land."

<sup>3</sup> The combat at Smithfield between the queen's brother and the champion of

but a hundred knights with their servants. These Flemish chevaliers constituted an armed band of mercenaries, ready to aid in enforcing obedience, if any opposition had occurred at the recognition of Elizabeth as queen-consort. The king regularly paid them for their attendance, for he presented the count de St. Pol with three hundred nobles, and each of his chevaliers with fifty.<sup>1</sup>

Elizabeth's marriage with Edward IV. drew upon them the enmity of no less a person than the celebrated Isabel of Castille, queen of Spain. In the Harleian MSS. is a letter from the Spanish ambassador, Granfidius de Sasiola, who uses these remarkable words :<sup>2</sup> "The queen of Castille was turned in her heart from England in time past for the unkindness she took of the king of England (Edward IV., whom God pardon), for his refusing her and taking to wife a widow-woman of England, for which cause there was mortal war between him and the earl of Warwick, even to his death."

The benefactions which Margaret of Anjou had bestowed upon Cambridge were continued by her successor; for early in 1465 Elizabeth appropriated a part of her income to the completion of the good work of her former mistress, and Queen's College owes its existence to these royal ladies—

"Anjou's heroine and the paler Rose,  
The rival of her crown and of her woes."

The enmity between Elizabeth and Warwick had not at this time amounted to any thing serious, since he stood as godfather to her eldest daughter, born at Westminster Palace, 1466. The baptism of this princess for a while conciliated her two grandmothers, Cicely duchess of York, and Jaquetta duchess of Bedford, who were likewise her sponsors. The christening was performed with royal pomp, and the babe received her mother's name of Elizabeth,—a proof that Edward was more inclined to pay a compliment to his wife than to his haughty mother.

Some months after the queen had brought an heiress to the throne, she ventured on another affront to the all-powerful minister, general, and relative of her royal lord. Warwick had set his mind on marrying Anne, the heiress of the duke of Exeter, to his nephew, George Neville. Meantime the queen slyly bought the consent of the rapacious duchess of Exeter,<sup>3</sup> for four thousand marks, and married the young

Burgundy did not take place till two years afterwards, when Anthony Woodville gained great honour by a decided personal advantage over the Burgundian. The duke of Clarence, afterwards the mortal foe of Anthony, carried his basnet.

<sup>1</sup> Monstrelet.

<sup>2</sup> Dated August 8th, 1483. When this was written, the Spanish ambassador was at the court of Richard III. See Second Series of Sir Henry Ellis' Letters. By this letter it is evident Warwick was negotiating for the hand of Isabel of Castille, who, it appears (from her history by Bernaldes Andrés, a Spanish MS. in the library of sir Thomas Phillipps, bart. of Middle Hill), was fourteen in 1464, not a little girl of six years, as Hall represents her. A Spanish maiden of that age would feel all the indignation her countryman describes.

<sup>3</sup> William of Worcester, p. 501. Anne of York, eldest child of Richard duke of York and Cicely Neville, was (according to the Friar's Genealogy) wedded

bride to her eldest son by sir John Gray, at Greenwich Palace, October 1466. The queen's eagerness for wealthy alliances was punished by the loss of her purchase-money, for the heiress of Exeter died in her minority.

As prime minister, relative, and general of Edward IV., Warwick had, from 1460 to 1465, borne a sway in England almost amounting to despotism. This influence was gradually transferred to the queen's family.<sup>1</sup> Edward had likewise so far forgotten gratitude and propriety, as to have offered some personal insult to a female relative of Warwick, generally supposed to be Isabel, his eldest daughter, who was, as the old chroniclers declare, the finest young lady in England. This conduct was the more aggravating, since Warwick had certainly delayed his master's marriage with various princesses, in hopes that, as soon as Isabel was old enough, Edward would have made her his queen, a speculation for ever disappointed by the exaltation of Elizabeth Gray. Warwick gave his daughter Isabel in marriage to the duke of Clarence; and England was soon after in a state of insurrection. As popular fury was especially directed against the queen's family, the Woodvilles were advised to abscond for a time.

The first outbreak of the muttering storm was a rebellion in Yorkshire, under a freebooter called Robin of Redesdale, declared by some to have been a noble, outlawed for the cause of the red Rose. The insurgent defeated Edward IV.'s forces at Edgecote, and pursuing the fugitives from the battle, into the forest of Dean, found there concealed the queen's father, who was then high treasurer,<sup>2</sup> with his eldest son John; they were, in the names, if not by the order, of Clarence and Warwick, hurried to Northampton, and beheaded, without judge or jury. For the queen's mother a still more fearful doom was intended. One of those terrific accusations of witchcraft was prepared against her, which were occasionally aimed at ladies of royal rank, whose conduct afforded no mark for other calumny. This was the third accusation of the kind which had taken place in the royal family since the year 1419.

The queen was preparing to accompany her husband in a progress into Norfolk, when this astounding intelligence reached her. The murder of her father and brother appears to have taken place in the middle

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in early youth to Henry Holland, duke of Exeter, the legitimate descendant of the line of Lancaster, by Elizabeth, sister of Henry IV. The duchess of Exeter was an atrocious character; she divorced and despoiled her first husband, and caused the death of her second. By Exeter she had this one daughter, who was the next heir of Lancaster after Edward, son of Henry VI.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Rivers was, at the time of the revolution of 1469, lord-treasurer (*Paston Papers*, vol. iv.); he had been tampering with the coin and circulation, which occasioned the fury of the great body of the people. See Carte.

<sup>2</sup> The Sprott Fragment (which ought to be called the Howard Chronicle) declares the two Rivers were seized at Grafton. The Fragment asserts, that Warwick and Clarence likewise attempted the life of Anthony Woodville in the same manner some time after, but he escaped murder almost miraculously—a circumstance never yet considered in connexion with the subsequent death of Clarence.

of harvest, 1469. The blow must have fallen with great severity on Elizabeth, whose affections were knit so strongly to her own family.

When the king advanced to the north, in order to inquire into these outrages, he was detained, in some kind of restraint, by Warwick and his brother Montague, at Warwick Castle, where an experiment was tried to shake his affections to Elizabeth, by the insinuation that her whole influence over him proceeded from her mother's skill in witchcraft. For this purpose, Thomas Wake, a partisan of the Neville faction, brought to Warwick Castle part of the stock in trade of a sorceress, which he declared was captured at Grafton.<sup>1</sup> Edward was far from being proof against such follies, yet this accusation seems to have had no effect on his mind. After being carried to Middleham Castle (Warwick's stronghold in the north), where he was detained some time, he entered into negotiations for the marriage of his infant heiress, Elizabeth of York, with young George Neville. This scheme greatly pleased the uncle and godfather of the boy, the archbishop of York, who persuaded his brothers to let Edward stay with him at his seat called the More, in Hertfordshire. Warwick sent up Edward, very severely guarded, from Middleham Castle.

From the More, Edward escaped speedily to Windsor,<sup>2</sup> and was soon once more in his metropolis, which was perfectly devoted to him, and where, it appears, his queen had remained in security during these alarming events. Again England was his own: for Warwick and Clarence, in alarm at his escape from the More, betook themselves to their fleet and fled. But the queen's gallant brother, Anthony Woodville, who had the command of the Yorkist navy, intercepted and captured all the rebel ships,<sup>3</sup> excepting that in which Warwick and Clarence, with their families, escaped with difficulty to France.

The queen was placed by the king in safety in the Tower,<sup>4</sup> before he marched to give battle to the insurgents. Her situation gave hopes of an addition to the royal family; she was the mother of three girls, but had not borne heirs-male to the house of York.

<sup>1</sup> This information is gathered from the memorial of the queen's mother, who, after all these distractions were composed, thought it prudent to defend herself in the following terms:—"Jaquetta duchess of Bedford to her sovereign lord the king thus humbly complaineth—That when she at all time hath, and yet doth, truly believe on God according to the faith of holy church, as a true Christian woman ought to do, yet Thomas Wake, esq. hath caused her to be brought into a common noise and disclaunder (slander) of witchcraft. At your last being at Warwick, sovereign lord (he was then in the custody of the three Nevilles, Warwick, Montague, and the archbishop of York), Wake brought to Warwick Castle, and exhibited to divers lords there present, an image of lead, made like to a man-at-arms, containing the length of a man's finger, and broken in the middle, and made fast with a wire, saying it was made by your said oratress to use with sorcery and witchcraft, when she never saw it before, God knoweth."—*Parl. Rolls*, vol. vi. p. 232.

<sup>2</sup> Fragment Chronicle. At this time England presented the strange spectacle of two kings both in captivity; Henry VI. was still prisoner to the York party, which seems, till a late period of this revolution, to have kept possession of the metropolis.

<sup>3</sup> Warkworth Chronicle, edited by J. O. Halliwell, esq., p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Fragment Chronicle.

Edward soon found that a spirit of disaffection was busy in his army; he narrowly escaped being surrendered once more into the power of Warwick, who had returned to England; but being warned by his faithful sergeant of minstrels, Alexander Carlile,<sup>1</sup> he fled half-dressed from his revolting troops, in the dead of night, and embarked at Lynn, with a few faithful friends.

Elizabeth was thus left alone, with her mother, to bide the storm. She was resident at the Tower, where her party still held Henry VI. a prisoner. While danger was yet at a distance, the queen's resolutions were remarkably valiant; she victualled and prepared the metropolitan fortress for siege, with great assiduity. But the very day that Warwick and Clarence entered London, in a truly feminine panic, Elizabeth betook herself to her barge, and fled up the Thames to Westminster, not to her own palace, but to a strong, gloomy building called the Sanctuary, which occupied a space at the end of St. Margaret's Churchyard.<sup>2</sup> Here she registered herself, her mother, her three little daughters, Elizabeth, Mary, and Cicely, with the faithful lady Scrope, her attendant, as sanctuary-women; and in this dismal place she awaited with a heavy heart the hour in which the fourth child of Edward IV. was to see the light.

On the 1st of November, 1470, the long-hoped-for heir of York was born, during this dark eclipse of the fortunes of his house. The queen was in want of every thing; but Thomas Milling, abbot of Westminster, sent various conveniences from the abbey close by. Mother Cobb, a well-disposed midwife, resident in the Sanctuary, charitably assisted the distressed queen in the hour of maternal peril, and acted as nurse to the little prince. Nor did Elizabeth, in this fearful crisis, want friends: for master Serigo, her physician, attended herself and her son; while a faithful butcher, John Gould, prevented the whole Sanctuary party from being starved into surrender, by supplying them with "half a beef and two muttons every week."

The little prince was baptized, soon after his birth, in the abbey, with no more ceremony than if he had been a poor man's son. Thomas Milling, the abbot of Westminster, however, charitably stood godfather for the little prisoner, and the duchess of Bedford and lady Scrope were his godmothers. The sub-prior performed the ceremony, and they gave him the name of his exiled sire.

Early in March the queen was cheered by the news that Edward IV.,

<sup>1</sup> The Sprott Fragment ceases in the midst of this information, which was doubtless one of the circumstances that the author heard from Edward's own mouth.

<sup>2</sup> At a short distance from Westminster Palace stood the Sanctuary, a massive structure, of strength sufficient to stand a siege. It had a church built over it, in the form of a cross. Such is the description given by Dr. Stukely, who had seen it standing. It was a place of such vast strength, built by Edward the Confessor, that the workmen employed in its demolition, in the last century, almost despaired of ever being able to level it. To the west of the Sanctuary stood the Almonry, where the alms of the abbey were distributed; and on this spot was erected the first printing-press, where Caxton published the first printed book known in England, called "The Game of Chess," under the patronage of Elizabeth's brother, and Tiptoft earl of Worcester. Anthony Woodville likewise translated and printed, at the Caxton press, the works of Christine of Pisa.



her royal lord, had landed at Ravenspur, and soon after that his brother, Clarence, forsook Warwick. From that moment the revolution of his restoration was as rapid as that of his deposition.

When Edward drew near the capital, "he sent, on the 9th of April, 1470, very comfortable messages to his queen, and to his true lords, servants, and lovers, who advised and practised secretly how he might be received and welcomed in his city of London."<sup>1</sup> The result was, that the metropolis opened its gates for Edward IV., and the Tower, with the unresisting prisoner, king Henry, was surrendered to him. Edward hurried to the Sanctuary, "and comforted the queen, that had a long time abided there, the security of her person resting solely on the great franchises of that holy place; sojourning in deep trouble, sorrow, and heaviness, which she sustained with all manner of patience belonging to any creature, and as constantly as ever was seen by any person of such high estate to endure, in the which season, nathless, she had brought into this world, to the king's greatest joy, a fair son, a prince, wherewith she presented her husband at his coming, to his heart's singular comfort and gladness, and to all them that him truly loved."<sup>2</sup>

The very morning of this joyful meeting, Elizabeth, accompanied by her royal lord, left the Sanctuary. Never before had Westminster Sanctuary received a royal guest, and little was it ever deemed a prince of Wales would first see light within walls that had hitherto only sheltered homicides, robbers, and bankrupts. The ruthless wars of the Roses, indeed, made the royal and the noble acquainted with strange house-mates; but never did the power of sanctuary appear so great a blessing to human nature, as when the innocent relatives of the contending parties fled to the altar for shelter. Like all benefits, sanctuary was abused, but, assuredly it sheltered many a human life in these destructive and hideous contests.

The same day that Edward IV. took Elizabeth out of Sanctuary, he carried her to the city, where he lodged her and her children in his mother's palace, Castle Baynard, a Bastille-built fortification, which had been held in his father's time, when the Tower of London was untenable. Here Edward and his queen heard divine service that night, and kept Good Friday solemnly next day. On Easter Sunday, Edward gained the battle of Barnet, and the deaths of Warwick and Montague insured the ultimate success of the house of York. Elizabeth remained at the Tower while her husband gained the battle of Tewksbury. The news of his success had scarcely reached her, before the Tower was threatened with storm by Falconbridge, a relative of the earl of Warwick, and "therein," says Fleetwood, "was the queen, my lord prince, and the ladies the king's daughters, all likely to stand in the greatest jeopardy that ever was," from the formidable attack of this last partisan of Lancaster. But the queen's valiant brother, Anthony Woodville, was there, and the queen, relying on his gallant aid, stood the danger this time

<sup>1</sup> Fleetwood's Chronicle (edited by J. Bruce, esq.) has been, in this narrative, collated by the valuable Warkworth Chronicle, edited by J. O. Halliwell, esq. both published by the Camden Society.

<sup>2</sup> Fleetwood's Chronicle, edited by J. Bruce, esq., p. 17.

without running away; but, assuredly, nature had never intended Elizabeth for an Amazon.

After Edward had crushed rebellion, by almost exterminating his opponents, he turned his attention to rewarding the friends to whom he owed his restoration. He sagaciously considered that the interesting situation in which his wife had placed herself, during his exile, had greatly contributed to his ultimate success. Indeed, the feminine helplessness of Elizabeth Woodville, and the passive resignation with which she endured the evils and inconveniences of the Sanctuary-house, in the hour of maternal weakness and agony, had created for her a tender regard throughout the realm, that actually did more benefit to the cause of York than the indomitable spirit of Margaret of Anjou effected for the opposite party. Wonder and affection were awakened for Elizabeth, and, during the winter of 1470-1, tidings of the queen's proceedings in Sanctuary were the favourite gossip of the matrons of London. Edward IV. bestowed princely rewards on those humble friends<sup>1</sup> who had aided "his Elizabeth," as he calls her, in that fearful crisis.

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## ELIZABETH WOODVILLE,

### QUEEN OF EDWARD IV.

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#### CHAPTER II.

Elizabeth's court at Windsor—Described by her guest—Her evening amusements—Banquet in her apartments—Her arrangements for her guest—Court at Westminster—Queen's visit to Oxford—Marriage of her second son—Death of Clarence—Queen's robes of the Garter—Death of Edward IV.—Elizabeth's widowhood—Her troubles—Opposed in council—Duke of Gloucester's letter to the queen—She sends for the young king—Receives news of her brother's and son's arrest—Takes sanctuary—Given the great seal—Surrenders her son, the young duke of York—Her son, Richard Gray, beheaded—Her marriage declared illegal—Usurpation of Richard III.—Murder of Edward V. and Richard of York—News of their death brought to the queen—Her despair and agony—Promises her eldest daughter to Henry of Richmond—Leaves sanctuary—Under control of John Nesfield—Forbids her daughter's marriage with Richmond—Relieved from her difficulties by the death of Richard III.—Her daughter brought to her—Restored to her rank as queen-dowager—Is god mother to prince Arthur—Receives the French ambassador—Retires to Bermondsey—Her will—Her poverty—Funeral—Place of burial discovered.

ELIZABETH'S court is described in a lively manner, by an eye-witness who was her guest, both at Windsor and Westminster, in 1472. This

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<sup>1</sup> He pensioned Margaret Cobb, with 12*l.* per annum; Dr. Serigo, with 40*l.* and likewise rewarded butcher Gould by leave to load a royal ship with hides and tallow—*Rymer's MSS.*, vol. xiv.

person was Louis of Bruges, lord of Grauthuse, governor of Holland,<sup>1</sup> who had hospitably received Edward, when he fled, in the preceding year, from England, and landed with a few friends at Sluys, "the most distressed company of creatures," as Comines affirms, "that ever was seen;" for Edward had pawned his military cloak, lined with martin fur, to pay the master of his ship, and was put on shore in his waistcoat. The lord of Grauthuse received him, and fed and clothed him. This Fleming had previously performed a mighty service for Edward, when, as ambassador from Philip of Burgundy, he had visited Scotland, and broken the contract between the daughter of the Scots' queen-regent, and the son of Margaret of Anjou.<sup>2</sup>

Finally, Grauthuse lent Edward IV. money and ships, without which he would never have been restored to his country and queen. After his restoration, Edward invited his benefactor to England, in order to testify his gratitude, and introduce him to his queen. A journal, written either by this nobleman or his secretary,<sup>3</sup> has been lately brought to light, containing the following curious passages:—"When the lord of Grauthuse came to Windsor, my lord Hastings received him, and led him to the far side of the quadrant (the quadrangle of Windsor Castle), to three chambers, where the king was then with the queen. These apartments were very richly hung with cloth of gold arras; and when he had spoken with the king, who presented him to the queen's grace, they then ordered the lord chamberlain Hastings to conduct him to his chamber, where supper was ready for him."

After his refreshment, the king had him brought immediately to the queen's own withdrawing-room, where she and her ladies were playing at the marteaux;<sup>4</sup> and some of her ladies were playing at closheys of ivory,<sup>5</sup> and some at divers other games, the which sight was full pleasant. Also king Edward danced with my lady Elizabeth, his eldest daughter. "In the morning, when matins were done, the king heard in his own chapel (that of St. George, at Windsor Castle), Our Lady mass, which was most melodiously sung. When the mass was done, king Edward gave his guest a cup of gold, garnished with pearl. In the midst of the cup was a great piece of unicorn's horn, to my estimation seven inches in compass; and on the cover of the cup a great sapphire. Then the king came into the quadrant. My lord prince, also, borne by his chamberlain, called master Vaughan,<sup>6</sup> bade the lord Grauthuse welcome."

<sup>1</sup> He was Deputy in the Low Countries for his master, Charles the Bold. Louis of Bruges seems to have united the characters of nobleman, merchant, and man of letters. Most of the precious MSS. of the Bibliothèque du Roi are of his collecting. He was likewise an author. <sup>2</sup> Monstrelet, vol. ii. p. 273.

<sup>3</sup> Narrative of Louis of Bruges, lord Grauthuse, edited by sir F. Madden. *Archæologia*. 1836.

<sup>4</sup> A game with balls, probably resembling marbles.

<sup>5</sup> Nine-pins, made of ivory.

<sup>6</sup> This faithful chamberlain, who carried the prince, in his infancy, every where after his father's steps, is the same sir Richard Vaughan, who testified his fidelity to his beloved charge in the bloody towers of Pontefract, during the usurpation of Richard of Gloucester. He belonged to a very fierce and hardy clan of Welsh marchmen.

(The innocent little prince was then only eighteen months old.) "Then the king took his guest into the little park, where they had great sport, and there the king made him ride on his own horse, a right fair hobby,<sup>1</sup> the which the king gave him. The king's dinner was ordained (ordered) in the lodge in Windsor Park. After dinner, the king showed his guest his garden and vineyard of pleasure. Then the queen did ordain a great banquet in her own apartments, at which king Edward, her eldest daughter, the duchess of Exeter, the lady Rivers,<sup>2</sup> and the lord of Grauthuse, all sat with her at one mess; and at another table, sat the duke of Buckingham, my lady, his wife,<sup>3</sup> my lord Hastings, chamberlain to the king, my lord Berners, chamberlain to the queen, the son of Lord Grauthuse, and master George Barthe, secretary<sup>4</sup> to the duke of Burgundy. There was a side table, at which sat a great *view* of ladies, all on one side of the room. Also on one side of the outer chamber sat the queen's gentlewoman. And when they had supped my lady Elizabeth, the king's eldest daughter, danced with the duke of Buckingham, her aunt's husband."

It appears to have been the etiquette of this court, that this young princess, then but six years old, should only dance with her father or uncles.

"Then about nine of the clock, the king and the queen, with her ladies and gentlewomen, brought the lord of Grauthuse to three chambers of pleasaunce, all hanged with white silk and linen cloth, and all the floors covered with carpets. There was ordained a bed for himself, of as good down as could be gotten. The sheets of Rennes cloth;<sup>5</sup> also fine festoons; the counterpane cloth of gold, furred with ermines. The tester and *ceiler* also shining cloth of gold; the curtains of white sarce-net; as for his head-suit and pillows, they were of the queen's own ordering. In the second chamber was likewise another state-bed, all white. Also in the chamber was made a couch with feather beds, and hanged above like a tent, knit like a net, and there was a cupboard. In the third chamber was ordained a bayne (bath) or two, which were covered with tents of white cloth."

Could the present age offer a more luxurious or elegant arrangement in a suite of sleeping-rooms, than in those provided by Elizabeth for her husband's friend?

"And when the queen, with all her ladies, had showed him these rooms, the queen, with the king and attendants, turned again to their own chambers, and left the said lord Grauthuse there with the lord-chamberlain Hastings, which *despoiled* him, (helped him undress), and they both went together to the bath. And when they had been in their baths as long as was their pleasure, they had green ginger, divers syrups,

<sup>1</sup> A cob pony, trained to war or field-sports. In Norfolk and Suffolk, ponies, especially shooting ponies, are constantly called hobbies to this hour.

<sup>2</sup> Heiress of lord Scales, wife of Anthony, second earl Rivers.

<sup>3</sup> Katharine, sister to Elizabeth Woodville, queen of England.

<sup>4</sup> Supposed to be the author of the Journal.

<sup>5</sup> The best linen woven at Rennes, in Brittany, superior, it seems, to that of Holland.

comfits, and ipocras, served by the order of the queen. And in the morning he took his cup<sup>1</sup> with the king and queen, and returned to Westminster again. And on St. Edward's day, 13th of October, king Edward kept his royal state at Westminster Palace. In the forenoon he came into the parliament in his robes, on his head a cap of maintenance, and sat in his most royal majesty, having before him his lords spiritual and temporal. Then the speaker of the common parliament, named William Allington, declared before the king and his nobles the intent and desire of his commons, especially in 'their commendation of the womanly behaviour and great constancy of his queen when he was beyond sea; also the great joy and surety of his land in the birth of the prince; and the great kindness and humanity of the lord Grauthuse, then present, shown to the king when in Holland.' Grauthuse was then, with all due ceremony, created earl of Winchester,—Occleve, the poet, reading aloud his letters patent. Then the king went into the Whitehall, whither came the queen crowned; also the prince, in his robes of state, borne after the queen, in the arms of his chamberlain, master Vaughan. And thus the queen, the king, with the little prince carried after them, proceeded into the abbey-church, and so up to the shrine of St. Edward, where they offered. Then he king turned down into the choir, where he sat in his throne. The new earl of Winchester bare his sword unto the time they went to dinner. As a finale to the entertainments, king Edward created a king-at-arms, baptizing him Guienne. Norroy was forced to proclaim the largess of the new earl of Winchester, since "Master Garter had an impediment in his tongue,"—a circumstance affording much mirth to the king. "A void<sup>2</sup> of light refreshments was then served to the king, and the lord of Grauthuse made his *congé*."

The queen's visit to Oxford took place soon after; it was long remembered there; she arrived from Woodstock after sunset with the king, her mother, and the duchess of Suffolk. They entered Oxford with a great crowd of people running before the royal charrettes, bearing torches. The queen's brother, Mr. Lionel Woodville, the new chancellor, received and harangued the royal party, who tarried till after dinner the next day. King Edward viewed the new buildings of Magdalen, and made an oration in praise of Oxford, declaring he had sent his nephews, the sons of the duchess of Suffolk, to be educated there, as a proof of his esteem.<sup>3</sup>

The queen presided over the espousals of her second son, Richard duke of York, with Anne Mowbray, the infant heiress of the duchy of Norfolk. St. Stephen's chapel, where the ceremony was performed, January, 1477, was splendidly hung with arras of gold on this occasion. The king, the young prince of Wales, the three princesses, Elizabeth,

<sup>1</sup> Walton calls the breakfast refreshment *taking his cup*, it being generally of ale, before the introduction of tea and coffee.

<sup>2</sup> The meal now called tea was, at this era, termed "a void," from being the dismissal of the company. It was served on a tray, since called a voider.

<sup>3</sup> The Memorials of Oxford date this royal visit 1481, at the completion of Magdalen; but the mention of the duchess of Bedford, the queen's mother, who died in 1472, proves that Elizabeth's visit to Oxford took place before that year.

Mary, and Cicely, were present; the queen led the little bridegroom, who was not five, and her brother, earl Rivers, led the baby bride, scarcely three years old. They afterwards all partook of a rich banquet, laid out in the Painted Chamber. The innocent and ill-fated infants, then married, verified the old English proverb, which says,

“Early wed, early dead.”<sup>1</sup>

Soon after this infant marriage, all England was startled by the strange circumstances attending the death of the duke of Clarence.

Edward IV., though deeply stained with crime, was, in the earlier periods of his life, susceptible of the tenderest feelings of natural affection and disinterested love; he had acted the part of a kind parent to his father's unprotected younger children.<sup>1</sup> Clarence was not more than twelve years old at the battle of Towton; it is therefore evident that he owed his high station wholly to the valiant arm of his elder brother. The best feelings of Edward were outraged by the unprovoked revolt of Clarence, nor did his return to allegiance, prompted as it was by the most sordid motives, raise him in his brother's esteem. Edward possessed, in an exaggerated degree, the revengeful spirit of the royal line of Plantagenet. “He shall repent it, through every vein of his heart,”<sup>2</sup> was his usual expression if any one crossed his will; and he too often kept his word. But if the misdeeds of a brother he had once so fondly loved, were not likely to be forgiven by Edward, they were still less likely to be forgotten by the queen, who had been cruelly injured by Clarence. Her beloved father and her brother had been put to death in his name; her brother Anthony, the pride of English chivalry, had narrowly escaped a similar fate, at a time when Clarence was a more active and responsible agent; and her mother had been accused of sorcery by his party.

Towards the spring of 1477, Clarence commenced a series of agitations, being exasperated because the queen opposed his endeavour to obtain the hand of Mary of Burgundy. Although so anxious for a wealthy marriage, his grief at the loss of his wife, Isabel of Warwick, had almost unsettled his reason, and he had illegally put one of her attendants to death, whom he accused of poisoning her. He muttered imputations of sorcery against the queen, in which he implicated king Edward.<sup>3</sup>

The queen was at Windsor with her royal lord, when news was brought him that his brother Clarence, after sitting at the council-board for many days, doggedly silent, with folded arms, had one morning

<sup>1</sup> By the early death of the heiress of the line of Mowbray, the royal title of Norfolk reverted to John lord Howard, the next representative of the heiress of Thomas Plantagenet, earl marshal and earl of Norfolk.

<sup>2</sup> The cherishing care he took of his young brothers, Clarence and Gloucester, and of his little sister Margaret, when concealed in Paston's chambers, before the battle of Northampton, is proved by sir John Fenn's letter, “My lord March cometh daily to visit lord George and lord Richard in the Temple.” These children were then of the ages of nine, seven, and five. Edward was a fine young man of eighteen. <sup>3</sup> Fenn's Paston Papers. <sup>4</sup> Parliamentary Rolls, vol. vi.

rushed into the council-room, and uttered most disrespectful words against the queen and his royal person, concerning the deaths of his friends Burdett and Stacy. The comments of the queen did not soothe Edward's mind, who hurried to Westminster, and the arrest, arraignment, and sentence of the unhappy Clarence soon followed. He was condemned to death, but the king demurred on his public execution. Clarence had, since the death of his beloved Isabel, desperately given himself over to intemperance, in order to drown the pain of thought. In his dismal prison a butt of malmsey was introduced, where he could have access to it. The duke was found dead, with his head hanging over the butt, the night after he had offered his mass-penny at the chapel within the Tower. Probably Clarence was the victim of his own frailty. He was beset with temptation; despair, loneliness, a vexed conscience, a habit of drinking, and a flowing butt of his favourite nectar at his elbow, left little trouble, either to assassins or executioners.<sup>1</sup> The partisans of the queen and the duke of Gloucester mutually recriminated his death on each other. Gloucester was certainly absent from the scene of action, residing in the north.

On the St. George's day succeeding this grotesque but horrible tragedy, the festival of the Garter was celebrated with more than usual pomp, and the queen took a decided part in it, and wore the robes as chief lady of the order.

The queen kept up a correspondence by letter with the duchess of Burgundy, with the ambitious hope of obtaining the hand of Mary of Burgundy, for her brother, lord Rivers. When the duchess visited the court of England in August, 1480, the queen's youngest brother, sir Edward Woodville, was sent with a fleet to escort her. The duchess sojourned at Cold Harbour, the city residence which lately belonged to her deceased brother Clarence. Among other gifts, she was presented, at her departure, with a magnificent side saddle.<sup>2</sup>

The queen's accomplished brother, lord Rivers, continued his patronage to the infant art of printing. In the archbishop of Canterbury's

<sup>1</sup> History has little more than the traditions of this mysterious fact to relate. The Bowyer Tower is one of the most retired of that circle of gloomy fortresses which surround the white Donjon, emphatically called the Tower of London; it is declared by Mr. Bayley (*History of the Tower*) to be the scene of Clarence's death. It consists of a strong prison-room, with a most suspicious-looking recess, and vaulted door walled up, a store-room for bows and arrows, and a dungeon. As neither the offices of cook nor butler could have been performed there, the malmsey could not have been the remnant of some festivity. For the purpose of Clarence's destruction, in some way or other, this butt of liquor must have been introduced into his lodging; the very fumes of the butt, with the head knocked out, would have destroyed a delicate person. After his death the story went among the common people, that being permitted to choose how he would die, he requested to be drowned in a butt of malmsey. This tale evidently was invented from the position in which the corpse was found.

<sup>2</sup> See *Wardrobe accounts of Edward IV.*, edited by sir Harris Nicolas, p. 12. who has reasoned in a luminous historical manner on the fallacious inferences drawn by Walpole regarding the absence of Margaret from England since her eleventh year.

library there is an illuminated MS., representing earl Rivers, introducing his printer Caxton, and a book, to king Edward and queen Elizabeth, who are seated in state, with their son, the prince of Wales, standing between them. The prince is very lovely, with flowing curls.<sup>1</sup>

The last years of king Edward's life were passed in repose and luxury, which had most fatal effects on his health. He had long given the queen's place in his affections to his lovely mistress, Jane Shore, a goldsmith's wife in the city, whom he had seduced from her duty.

The death of Edward IV. is said to have been hurried by the pain of mind he felt at the conduct of Louis XI., who broke the engagement he had made, to marry the dauphin to the princess Elizabeth of York; but intermittent fever was the immediate cause of his death. When expiring, he made his favourites, Stanley and Hastings, vow reconciliation with the queen and her family; and, propped with pillows, the dying monarch exhorted them to protect his young sons. He died with great professions of penitence.

If the king left any directions for the government of his kingdom during his son's minority, they were not acted upon, for no will of his is extant, but one made at the time of his invasion of France, 1475. Excepting the control of his daughters' marriages, this document gave no authority to the queen;<sup>2</sup> though it secures to her, with many affectionate expressions, all the furniture, jewels, and other moveables, she had used at various palaces, and the possession of her dower, which was, unfortunately for her, appropriated to her from the confiscated possessions of Lancaster.

Edward expired at Westminster, April 9th, 1483. On the day of his death, his body, with the face, arms, and breast uncovered, was laid out on a board for nine hours, and all the nobility, and the lord-mayor and aldermen of London, sent for to recognise it, and testify that he was really dead. Afterwards he was robed and clad royally, and the whole psalter was said over the body, and it was watched by bannerets and knights, in long black gowns and hoods.<sup>3</sup> At the mass of requiem, the queen's chamberlain, lord Dacre, offered for her; her son, the marquis of Dorset, and lord Hastings, bore distinguished parts at the funeral; but the earl of Lincoln, son of the duchess of Suffolk, Edward IV.'s sister, attended as chief mourner at his uncle's burial. The royal corpse was finally taken by water to Windsor, and interred with great pomp, in the beautiful chapel of St. George.

Skelton (the unworthy laureate of Henry VII. and Henry VIII.) has made Edward IV. the subject of a poem, which probably first brought him into notice at the court of Elizabeth of York, daughter to the deceased monarch.

"I made the Tower strong, I wist not why,—  
Knew not for whom! I purchased Tattersal;<sup>4</sup>  
I strengthened Dover on the mountain high,  
And London I convoked to fortify her wall;

<sup>1</sup> This illumination furnishes the only portrait of Edward V.

<sup>2</sup> *Excerpta Historica*, p. 366.

<sup>3</sup> Sandford.

<sup>4</sup> A stately castle in Lincolnshire.



I made Nottingham a palace royal,  
 Windsor, Eltham, and many other mo;  
 Yet at the last I went from them all,  
*Et ecce nunc in pulvere dormio!*  
 Where is now my conquest and royal array?  
 Where be my coursers and my horses high?  
 Where is my mirth, my solace, and my play?  
 As vanity is nought, all is wandered away!"

Then addressing his widowed queen by the familiar epithet which tradition says he was accustomed to call her, Edward is supposed to say—

"Oh! Lady Bessee, long for me ye may call!  
 For I am departed until the doomsday;  
 But love ye that Lord who is sovereign of all."

Elizabeth was left, in reality, far more desolate and unprotected in her second than in her first widowhood. The young king was pursuing his studies at Ludlow castle, and presiding over his principality of Wales, under the care of his accomplished uncle, Rivers, and the guardianship of his faithful chamberlain, Vaughan, the same person who carried him in his arms, after the queen and his royal father, on all public occasions, when the little prince was a lovely babe of eighteen months old.

Elizabeth sat at the first council after the death of her husband, and proposed that the young king should be escorted to London with a powerful army. Fatally for himself and his royal master's children, jealousy of the Woodvilles prompted Hastings to contradict this prudent measure. He asked her insolently, "Against whom the young sovereign was to be defended? Who were his foes? Not his valiant uncle Gloucester? Not Stanley, or himself? Was not this proposed force rather destined to confirm the power of her kindred, and enable them to violate the oaths of amity they had so lately sworn by the death-bed of their royal master?" He finished by vowing, "that he would retire from court, if the young king was brought to London surrounded by soldiers."

Thus taunted, the hapless Elizabeth gave up, with tears, the precautionary measures her maternal instinct had dictated; the necessity for which, not a soul in that infatuated council foreboded but herself, and even *she* was not aware of her real enemy. The turbulent and powerful aristocracy, at the head of whom was Hastings, and who had ever opposed her family, were the persons she evidently dreaded. The duke of Gloucester had been very little at court since the restoration, and never yet had entered into angry collision with the Woodvilles. He was now absent, at his government of the Scottish borders. When he heard of the death of the king, he immediately caused Edward V. to be proclaimed at York, and wrote a letter of condolence<sup>1</sup> to the queen, so full of deference, kindness, and submission, that Elizabeth thought she should have a most complying friend in the first prince of the blood. The council commanded earl Rivers to bring up the young king, unat-

<sup>1</sup> Carte. Hall.

tended by the militia of the Welsh border,—those hardy soldiers, who had more than once turned the scale of conquest in favour of York ; and, if they had now been headed by the gallant Rivers, they would have insured the safety of Edward V.

The astounding tidings, that the duke of Gloucester, abetted by the duke of Buckingham, had intercepted the young king, with an armed force, on his progress to London, had seized his person, and arrested earl Rivers and lord Richard Gray, on the 29th of April, were brought to the queen, at midnight, on the 3d of May. Elizabeth then bitterly bewailed the time that she was persuaded from calling out the militia. In that moment of agony she, however, remembered, that while she could keep her second son in safety, the life of the young king was secure. "Therefore," says Hall,<sup>1</sup> "she took her young son, the duke of York, and her daughters, and went out of the palace of Westminster into the Sanctuary, and there lodged in the abbot's place, and she, and all her children and company, were registered as sanctuary persons." Dorset, the queen's eldest son, directly he heard of the arrest of his brother, weakly forsook his important trust, as constable of the Tower, and came into Sanctuary to his mother. "Before day broke, the lord-chancellor, then the archbishop of Rotherham,<sup>2</sup> who lived in York Place, beside Westminster Abbey, having received the news of the duke of Gloucester's proceedings, called up his servants, and took with him the great seal, and went to the queen, about whom he found much heaviness, rumble, haste, and business, with conveyance of her (household) stuff into Sanctuary. Every man was busy to carry, bear, and convey household stuffs, chests, and fardels (packages) ; no man was unoccupied, and some walked off, with more than they were directed, to other places." The queen sat alone below on the rushes, in a state of desolation. Another chronicler adds to this picturesque description, "that her long fair hair, so renowned for its beauty, escaped from its confinement, and, streaming over her person, swept on the ground :"—a strange contrast with the rigid etiquette of royal widows' costume, which commanded not only that such profusion of glittering tresses should be hid under hood and veil, but that even the queen's forehead should be covered with a white frontlet, and her chin, to the upper lip, with a piece of lawn called a barb. The faithful archbishop acquainted the sorrowing queen with a cheering message, "sent him by lord Hastings in the night."

"Ah, woe worth him!" replied Elizabeth, 'for it is he that goeth about to destroy me and my blood.'

"Madame," said the archbishop, 'be of good comfort ; I assure you, if they crown any other king than your eldest son, whom they have with them, we will, on the morrow, crown his brother, whom you have with you here. And here is the great seal, which in like wise as your noble husband gave it to me, so I deliver it to you for the use of your son.' And therewith he delivered to the queen the great seal, and departed from her in the dawning of day ; and when he opened his window, and looked forth on the Thames, he saw the river covered with

<sup>1</sup> Quarto edit. p. 350.

<sup>2</sup> Archbishop of York.

boats full of the duke of Gloucester's servants, watching that no one might go to the queen's asylum."<sup>1</sup> Sir Thomas More (and he ought to be good authority for any thing relating to chancellor's seals) affirms, that the archbishop, alarmed at the step he had taken, went afterwards to Elizabeth, then in Sanctuary, and persuaded her to return the great seal; but Gloucester never forgave him for its original surrender.

The apartments of the abbot of Westminster are nearly in the same state, at the present hour, as when they received Elizabeth and her train of young princesses. The noble stone hall, now used as a dining-room for the students of Westminster School, was, doubtless, the place where Elizabeth seated herself in her despair, "*alow* on the rushes, all desolate and dismayed."<sup>2</sup> Still may be seen the circular hearth in the midst of the hall, and the remains of a *louvre* in the roof, at which such portions of smoke, as chose to leave the room, departed. But the merry month of May was entered when Elizabeth took refuge there, and round about the hearth were arranged branches and flowers, while the stone floor was strewn with green rushes. At the end of the hall is oak panelling, latticed at top, with doors, leading by winding stone stairs, to the most curious nest of little rooms that the eye of antiquary ever looked upon. These were, and still are, the private apartments of the dignitaries of the abbey, where all offices of buttery, kitchen, and laundry, are performed, under many a quaint Gothic arch, in some places (even at present) rich with antique corbel and foliage. This range, so interesting as a specimen of the domestic usages of the middle ages, terminates in the abbot's own sanctum or sitting-room, which still looks down on his lovely quiet flower-garden. Nor must the passage be forgotten, leading from this room to the corridor, furnished with latitudes, now remaining, where the abbot might, unseen, be witness of the conduct of his monks in the great hall below. Communicating with these are the state apartments of the royal abbey, larger in dimensions, and more costly in ornament, richly dight with painted glass and fluted oak panelling. Among these may be especially noted, one called the organ-room; likewise the ante-chamber to the great Jerusalem Chamber, which last was the abbot's state reception-room, and retains to this day, with its Gothic window of painted glass, of exquisite workmanship, its curious tapestry, and fine original oil portrait of Richard II.<sup>3</sup>

Such are the principal features of the dwelling, whose monastic seclusion was once broken by the mournful plaints of the widowed queen,

<sup>1</sup> Hall, p. 350.

<sup>2</sup> Hall's expression is, that the queen fled to the *abbot's place*, or palace, within Westminster Abbey; an assertion which proves that Elizabeth was not an inmate of the Sanctuary building. It must be remembered that the whole of the Abbey garden, cemetery, dwellings, and precincts, were sanctuary ground, as well as the building called the Sanctuary.

<sup>3</sup> The fire-place, before which Henry IV. expired, had been enriched by Henry VII. with elaborate wood entablatures, bearing his armorial devices; an addition which is the most modern part of this exquisite remnant of domestic antiquity. The authors of this work are indebted for the examination of the secluded portions of Westminster Abbey to the courteous permission of the rev. Henry Milman.

or echoed to the still more unwonted sounds of infant voices : for, with the exception of the two beautiful and womanly maidens, Elizabeth and Cicely, the royal family were young children. The queen took with her into sanctuary Elizabeth, seventeen years old at this time, afterwards married to Henry VII. The next princess, Mary, had died at Greenwich, a twelvemonth before this calamitous period. Cicely, whom Hall calls "less fortunate than fair," was in her fifteenth year; she afterwards married lord Wells. These three princesses had been the companions of their mother in 1470, when she had formerly sought sanctuary. Richard, duke of York, born at Shrewsbury in 1472, was at this time eleven years old. Anne, born in 1474, after the date of her father's will (in which only the eldest daughters are named), was about eight years old. Katharine, born at Eltham, about August, 1479, then between three and four years old; she afterwards married the heir of Devonshire. Bridget, born at Eltham, 1480, Nov. 20th, then only in her third year; she was devoted to the convent from her birth, and was afterwards professed a nun at Dartford.

The queen had, in council, appointed May 4th for her son's coronation; his false uncle, however, did not bring him to London till that day. Edward V. then entered the city, surrounded by officers of the duke of Gloucester's retinue, who were all in deep mourning for the death of the late monarch. At the head of this *possé* rode Gloucester himself, habited in black, with his cap in his hand, oft-times bowing low, and pointing out his nephew (who wore the royal mantle of purple velvet) to the homage of the citizens. Edward V. was at first lodged at the bishop of Ely's palace;<sup>1</sup> but as the good bishop (in common with all the high clergy) was faithful to the heirs of Edward IV., the young king was soon transferred to the regal apartments in the Tower, under pretence of awaiting his coronation. Gloucester's next object was to get possession of prince Richard, then safe with the queen. After a long and stormy debate, between the ecclesiastical peers and the temporal peers, at a council held in the Star Chamber (close to Elizabeth's retreat), it was decided "that there might be sanctuary men and women, but as children could commit no crime for which an asylum was needed, the privileges of sanctuary could not extend to them; therefore the duke of Gloucester, who was now recognised as lord-protector, could possess himself of his nephew by force, if he pleased." The archbishop of Canterbury was unwilling that force should be used, and he went, with a deputation of the temporal peers, to persuade Elizabeth to surrender her son. When they arrived at the Jerusalem Chamber, the archbishop urged "that the young king required the company of his brother, being melancholy without a playfellow." To this Elizabeth replied,—

"Troweth the protector (ah, pray God he may prove a protector!) that the king doth lack a playfellow?<sup>2</sup> Can none be found to play with the king, but only his brother, which hath no wish to play because of

<sup>1</sup> Its site was the spot now called Ely Place, close to Hatton Garden. It was from these once famous gardens that Richard asked for the strawberries, on the eventful morning of the 13th of June.

<sup>2</sup> Hall, p. 355.

sickness? as though princes, so young as they be, could not play without their peers—or children could not play without their kindred, with whom (for the most part) they agree worse than with strangers!"

At last she said, "My lord, and all my lords now present, I will not be so suspicious as to mistrust your truths." Then, taking young Richard by the hand, she continued, "Lo, here is this gentleman, whom I doubt not would be safely kept by me, if I were permitted; and well do I know there be some such deadly enemies to my blood, that, if they wist where any lay in their own bodies, they would let it out if they could. The desire of a kingdom knoweth no kindred; brothers have been brothers' bane, and may the nephews be sure of the uncle? Each of these children are safe while they be asunder. Notwithstanding, I here deliver him, and his brother's life with him, into your hands, and of you I shall require them before God and man. Faithful be ye I wot well, and power ye have, if ye list, to keep them safe; but if ye think I fear too much, yet beware ye fear not too little!" And therewithal, continued she, to the child, "Farewell, mine own sweet son! God send you good keeping! Let me kiss you once ere you go, for God knoweth when we shall kiss together again!"

And therewith she kissed and blessed him, and turned her back and wept, leaving the poor innocent child weeping as fast as herself.<sup>1</sup>

When the archbishop and the deputation of lords had received the young duke, they brought him into the Star-chamber, where the lord protector took him in his arms, with these words, "Now, welcome, my lord, with all my very heart!" He then brought him to the bishop's palace at St. Paul's, and from thence honourably through the city to the young king at the Tower, out of which they were never seen abroad.

Meantime, preparations went on, night and day, in the abbey and the vicinity, for the coronation of Edward V. Even the viands for the banquet were bought, which Hall declares were afterwards spoilt and thrown away.<sup>2</sup> On the 13th of June, Richard of Gloucester called a council at the Tower, ostensibly to fix the precise time of the coronation, but in reality to ascertain which of the lords were in earnest to have young Edward for their king. The first attack on Elizabeth took place at this council table, when Gloucester, after finding Hastings incorruptible in his fealty to the heirs of Edward IV., broke out into a strain of invective against him, as leagued with that "witch dame Gray, called his brother's wife, who, in conjunction with Jane Shore, had by their sorceries withered his arm." He showed his arm, which all present well knew

<sup>1</sup> Sir Thomas More; and Hall, p. 358. These historians, with great appearance of truth, place Elizabeth's surrender of the duke of York some days before the executions of her son Richard Gray and her brother, at Pontefract.

<sup>2</sup> Harl. MSS. 433, 1651, is a note of 14*l.* 11*s.* 5*d.* paid to John Belle, being a composition for his charges of 32*l.* for the supply of wild fowl bought for the intended coronation of "Edward, the bastard son of king Edward IV." He was thus designated in the charge the court tailor made for his dress prepared for this ceremony. The partisans of Richard III. have made some odd mistakes, as if he wore the dress at his uncle's coronation; but he no more wore the dress than he ate this wild fowl.

had been long in that state. Hastings, being about to deny any alliance with the queen, or the powers of darkness, was rudely interrupted, dragged forth to the Tower-yard, and beheaded, without trial, before Gloucester's dinner was served. The same morning, Hastings had exulted much, on hearing the news that lord Richard Gray, the queen's son, and earl Rivers, her brother, whom he especially hated, had been put to death at Pontefract.

From that moment Elizabeth found her worst anticipations more than realised. The next blow was the attempt made at St. Paul's Cross, by Dr. Shaw, to prove her marriage invalid and her children illegitimate. This man, however, overshot his mark, by attacking Cicely of York,<sup>1</sup> Richard's mother; he repeated the scandals her son Clarence had cast upon her name, and reaped no fruits but disgrace for his blundering malice.

Soon afterwards, the faction of the duke of Gloucester presented a petition, to prevent the crown from falling to the issue of "the pretended marriage between king Edward and Elizabeth Gray, made without the assent of the lords of the land, and by the sorcery of the said Elizabeth and her mother Jaquetta (as the public voice is through the land), privily and secretly, in a chamber, without proclamation by banns, according to the laudable custom of the church of England; the said king Edward being married and troth-plight a long time before to one Eleanor Butler, daughter to the old earl of Shrewsbury."<sup>2</sup> A forced recognition of Richard as king, in the hall of Crosby House, his town residence, followed the presentation of this petition, and from that day, June 26th, the son of Elizabeth was considered deposed. The coronation of Richard III. took place ten days after.

Among the gloomy range of fortresses belonging to the Tower, tradition has pointed out the Portcullis Tower as the scene of the murder of the young princes. The royal children were probably removed to this building when their uncle came to take possession of the regal apartments in the Tower, on the 4th of July.<sup>3</sup> "Forthwith the two young

<sup>1</sup> All Richard's private councils were held at the dower residence of his mother at Baynard's Castle, where she was then abiding. He wrote to her accounts of most of his proceedings (see *Walpole's Historic Doubts*), and, from the tenour of his letters, there is little doubt but what she favoured his usurpation. Shaw's attack was that of an officious partisan, eager to be busy before he had sufficient information of what was required from him. He was brother to Richard's friend, the lord-mayor.—See *Archæologia*, on the subject of Cicely of York.

<sup>2</sup> Neither this petition, nor the copy of it in the act of parliament, casts a slur on the character of dame Eleanor; it was probably a marriage in early youth. Eleanor has been an enigma to the genealogy of Talbot; but Milles, in his *Catalogue of Honour*, clearly identifies her (p. 743). She was daughter to the brave son of the great earl of Shrewsbury, young John Talbot, as he is called by Shakspeare, and of his first wife Joan Chedder, who left him only daughters. Her elder sister married John Mowbray, third duke of Norfolk. Eleanor married Thomas Butler, lord of Sudley, and seems to have lived and died a stainless character; she was a great benefactress to St. Bennet's College, Cambridge. Her niece, Anne Talbot, likewise married a lord Sudley, which has occasioned some mistakes.

<sup>3</sup> Hall, after Sir T. More, p. 375, whose words, somewhat modernised and ab-

princes were both shut up, and all their people removed, but only one, called Black Will, or Will Slaughter, who was set to serve them, and four keepers to guard them. The young king was heard to say, sighingly, 'I would mine uncle would let me have my life, though he taketh my crown.' After which time the prince never tied his points, nor any thing attended to himself, but with that young babe, his brother, lingered in thought and heaviness till the traitorous deed delivered them from wretchedness."

During Richard's progress to the north, he roused sir James Tyrrel from his pallet bed, in his guard-chamber, one night at Warwick, and sent him to destroy the royal children. Sir Robert Brakenbury refused to co-operate, but gave up the keys of the Tower for one night to the usurper's emissary.

"Then sir James Tyrrel devised that the princes should be murdered in bed, to the execution whereof he appropriated Miles Forest, one of their keepers, a fellow flesh-bred in murder; and to him he joined one John Dighton, his own horse-keeper, a big, broad, square knave. All their other attendants being removed from them, and the harmless children in bed, these men came into their chamber, and suddenly lapping them in the clothes, smothered and stifled them till thoroughly dead; then laying out their bodies in the bed, they fetched sir James to see them, who caused the murderers to bury them at the stair-foot, deep in the ground, under a heap of stones. Then rode sir James in great haste to king Richard, and showed him the manner of the murder, who gave him great thanks, but allowed not their burial in so vile a corner, but would have them buried in consecrated ground. Sir Robert Brakenbury's priest then took them up, and where he buried them was never known,' for he died directly afterwards."

"But when," continues sir Thomas More, "the news was first brought to the unfortunate mother, yet being in sanctuary, that her

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breviated, have been followed. Later discoveries have shown that Tyrrel was vice-constable of England, under Edward IV. and used to put illegal executions into effect.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Thomas More has, in these accounts, followed the deposition of the criminals who perpetrated the dark deed. Tyrrel was condemned so late as 1499, for some minor Yorkist plot, and gave this information before his execution. His evidence, and that of his satellites, was fully corroborated by the bones discovered under the stairs of the Record Office in 1664, which office was no other *than the chapel within the Tower*; a spot which embraced the two requisite objects of concealment and consecration. The murderous usurper, whose first pang of conscience originated in the unchristian manner of his victim's burial, ordered them to be exhumed from under the stairs where they were first put, and *laid in a hallowed place*. The priest of the Tower found no spot equally sacred and secret as the entrance to his own chapel, in which service was then performed every day. The desecration of the chapel and the change of its name to that of the Record Office, have prevented historians from identifying it as a consecrated spot, perfectly agreeing with Richard's directions. Henry VII., who could only gain intelligence of the *first* burial, vainly searched for the bodies, as the priest of the Tower, who could have directed him, had died soon after he had transferred the bodies, and the secret died with him; till the alteration of the chapel into a depo: for papers revealed it in the reign of Charles II.

two sons were murdered, it struck to her heart like the sharp dart of death; she was so suddenly amazed that she swooned and fell to the ground, and there lay in great agony, like to a dead corpse. And after she was revived and came to her memory again, she wept and sobbed, and with pitiful screeches filled the whole mansion. Her breast she beat, her fair hair she tared and pulled in pieces, and calling by name her sweet babes, accounted herself mad when she delivered her younger son out of sanctuary, for his uncle to put him to death. After long lamentation, she kneeled down and cried to God to take vengeance, 'who,' she said, 'she nothing doubted would remember it;' and when in a few months Richard unexpectedly lost his only son, the child for whose advancement he had steeped his soul in crime, Englishmen declared that the imprecations of the agonised mother had been heard."<sup>1</sup>

The wretched queen's health sank under the load of intense anguish inflicted by these murders, which had been preceded by the illegal execution of her son, lord Richard Gray, and of her noble-minded brother at Pontefract. She was visited in sanctuary by a priest-physician, Dr. Lewis,<sup>2</sup> who likewise attended Margaret Beaufort, mother to Henry Tudor, earl of Richmond, then an exile in Bretagne.<sup>3</sup> The plan of uniting the princess Elizabeth with this last scion of the house of Lancaster was first suggested to the desolate queen by Dr. Lewis. She eagerly embraced the proposition, and the good physician becoming, by means of daily visits, the medium of negotiation between the two mothers, the queen finally agreed to recognise Henry Tudor as king of England, if he were able to dispossess the usurper, and obtain the hand of her daughter.

Buckingham, having been disgusted by Richard, his partner in crime, rose in arms. The queen's son, Dorset, who had escaped out of sanctuary by the agency of his friend Lovel, one of the tyrant's ministers, raised an insurrection in Yorkshire, with the queen's valiant brother, sir Edward Woodville; but, on Buckingham's defeat, fled to Paris, where he continued the treaty for the marriage of his half-sister the princess royal, and Henry Tudor.

After the utter failure of Buckingham's insurrection, Elizabeth was reduced to despair, and finally was forced to leave sanctuary, and surrender herself and daughters into the hands of the usurper, March, 1484. For this step she has been blamed severely, by those who have not taken a clear and close view of the difficulties of her situation. She had probably, in the course of ten months, exhausted her own means, and tired the hospitality of the monks at Westminster. Moreover, though the king could not lawfully infringe the liberties of sanctuary, he could cut off supplies of food, and starve out the inmates,<sup>4</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> This dreadful scene is noted by sir Thomas More as happening during Richard III.'s absence at York, where he was crowned in September 1484.

<sup>2</sup> Hall, pp. 390-392. His priesthood is proved by the appellation, "Sir." It must have given him peculiar facilities for conferring with Elizabeth, in the abbey of Westminster.

<sup>3</sup> Grandson to Katherine of Valois, queen of Henry V. See her Memoir.

<sup>4</sup> Hubert de Burgh was nearly starved to death by Henry III. There have been instances of actual starvation.



he kept a guard of soldiers round the abbey, commanded by John Nesfield, who watched all comers and goers. Elizabeth, however, would not leave her retreat, without exacting a solemn oath, guaranteeing the safety of her children from Richard; which the usurper took in the presence of the lord-mayor and aldermen, as well as the lords of the council. The terms of Elizabeth's surrender are peculiarly bitter; for it is evident that she and her daughters not only descended into the rank of mere private gentlewomen, but she herself was held in personal restraint, since the annuity of seven hundred marks, allotted by act of parliament for her subsistence, was to be paid, not to her, but to John Nesfield, squire of the body to king Richard, "for the finding, exhibition and attendance of Dame Elizabeth Gray (late *calling herself* queen of England)." Thus Elizabeth had not a servant she could call her own, for this myrmidon of king Richard's was to find her, not only with food and clothes, but attendance.

After leaving sanctuary, some obscure apartments in the palace of Westminster are supposed to have been the place of her abode. From thence she wrote to her son Dorset at Paris, to put an end immediately to the treaty of marriage between the earl of Richmond and the princess Elizabeth, and to return to her. The parties who had projected the marriage were struck with consternation, and greatly incensed at the queen's conduct; but these steps were the evident result of the personal restraint she was then enduring.

If Richard III. chose to court her daughter as his wife, queen Elizabeth ought to be acquitted of blame; for it is evident, that if she had been as yielding in the matter as commonly supposed, she would not have been under the control of John Nesfield.

The successful termination of the expedition undertaken by the earl of Richmond, to obtain his promised bride, and the crown of England, at once avenged the widowed queen and her family on the usurper, and restored her to liberty. Instead of being under the despotic control of the royal hunchback's man-at-arms, the queen made joyful preparation to receive her eldest daughter, who was brought to her at Westminster, from Sheriff Hutton, with honour, attended by a great company of noble ladies.<sup>1</sup>

Queen Elizabeth had the care of her daughter till the January following the battle of Bosworth, when she saw her united in marriage to Henry of Richmond, the acknowledged king of England.

One of Henry VII.'s first acts was to invest the mother of his queen with the privileges and state befitting her rank, as the widow of an English sovereign. She had never been recognised as queen-dowager, excepting in the few wrangling privy-councils that intervened, between the death of her husband, and her retreat into the abbey of Westminster; and even during these, her advice had been disregarded, and her orders defied; therefore to Henry VII., her son-in-law, she owed the first regular recognition of her rights, as widow of an English sovereign. Unfortunately Elizabeth had not been dowered on the lands anciently

<sup>1</sup> Lord Bacon's Life of Henry VII. p. 2.

appropriated to the queens of England, but on those of the duchy of Lancaster,<sup>1</sup> which Henry VII. claimed, as heir of John of Gaunt. However, a month after the marriage of her daughter to Henry VII. the queen-dowager received possession of some of the dower-palaces, among which Waltham, Farnham, Masshebury, and Baddow, may be noted.<sup>2</sup> Henry likewise adds a pension of 102*l.* per annum, from his revenues. The scandalous entries on the Parliamentary Rolls, whereby she was deprived of her dower in the preceding reign, were ordered by the judges to be burnt, their first lines only being read, "because from their falseness and shamefulness they were only deserving of utter oblivion."

Although so much has been said in history, regarding Henry VII.'s persecution of his mother-in-law, this, the only public act passed regarding her which appears on the rolls, is marked with delicacy and respect. If she were deprived of her rights and property once more, no evidence exists of the fact, excepting mere assertion. Nor are assertions, even of contemporaries, to be credited without confirmatory documents, at any era when a country was divided into factions, furious as those which kept the reign of Henry VII. in a continual ferment. It is possible that Henry VII. personally disliked his mother-in-law; and in this he was by no means singular, for there never was a woman who contrived to make more personal enemies; but that he ever deprived her of either property or dignity, remains yet to be proved.

This queen had passed through a series of calamities, sufficient to wean the most frivolous person from pleasure and pageantry; she had to mourn the untimely deaths of three murdered sons, and she had four daughters wholly destitute, and dependent on her for their support; it can therefore scarcely be matter of surprise that in the decline of life she seldom shared in the gaieties of her daughter's court. Nevertheless, she appeared there frequently enough to invalidate the oft-repeated assertions, that she fell into disgrace with the king for encouraging the rebellions of the earl of Lincoln and Lambert Simnel. Was such conduct possible? The earl of Lincoln had been proclaimed heir to the throne by Richard III., and, as such, was the supplanter of all her children; and Lambert Simnel represented a youth<sup>3</sup> who was the son of Clarence, her enemy, and the grandson of the mighty earl of Warwick, the sworn foe of all the house of Woodville. However, at the very time she is declared to be in disgrace for such unnatural partiality, she was chosen by the king, in preference to his own beloved mother, as sponsor to his dearly prized heir, prince Arthur. "On September 20th, 1486, Elizabeth of York gave birth to an heir, and on Sunday following, her mother, the queen-dowager, stood godmother to him in Winchester Cathe-

<sup>1</sup> This change seems first to have been made by Henry IV., who, by his will, caused his widow Joanna of Navarre, to be dowered on the duchy of Lancaster, a custom continued to the days of Edward IV.

<sup>2</sup> Memoir of Elizabeth of York, by sir Harris Nicolas.

<sup>3</sup> The existence of the young earl of Warwick was a profound court-secret, till the imposture of Lambert Simnel obliged Henry VII. to show the real person to the public.

dral." After describing the procession, in which the princess Cicely carried the infant, the historian adds, "Queen Elizabeth was in the cathedral, abiding the coming of the prince; she gave a rich cup of gold, covered, which was borne by Sir Davy Owen. The earl of Derby gave a gold salt, and the Lord Maltravers gave a coffer of gold; these standing with the queen as sponsors."<sup>1</sup>

Soon afterwards, Henry VII. sought to strengthen his interest in Scotland, by negotiating a marriage between James III. and his mother-in-law, a husband certainly young enough to be her son; yet his violent death alone prevented her from wearing the crown matrimonial of Scotland,—when she would have been placed in a situation to injure her son-in-law, if such had been her wish.

The last time the queen-dowager appeared in public was in a situation of the highest dignity. The queen-consort had taken to her chamber, previously to her accouchement, in the close of the year 1489, when her mother, Elizabeth Woodville, received the French ambassador<sup>2</sup> in great state, assisted by Margaret, the king's mother.

The next year, Henry VII. presented his mother-in-law with an annuity of 400*l*.<sup>3</sup> No surrender of lands of equal value has yet been discovered; yet, strange to say, historians declare she was stripped of every thing, because about this time she retired into the convent of Bermondsey. Here she had every right to be, not as a prisoner, but as a cherished and highly honoured inmate: for the prior and monks of Bermondsey were solemnly bound, by the deeds of their charter, to find hospitality for the representatives of their great founder, Clare, earl of Gloucester, in the state-rooms of the convent.<sup>4</sup> Now Edward IV. was heir to the Clares, and Elizabeth, queen-dowager, had every right, as his widow, to appropriate the apartments expressly reserved for the use of the founder.<sup>5</sup> She had a right of property there; and as it was the custom in the middle ages, for royal persons to seek monastic seclusion, when health declined, not only for devotional purposes, but for medical advice, where could Elizabeth better retire, than to a convent bound by its charter to receive her? Eighteen months after, she was seized with a fatal illness at Bermondsey, and, on her death-bed, dictated the following will:—

"In the name of God, &c., 10th April, 1492, I, Elizabeth, by the grace of God queen of England, late wife to the most victorious prince of blessed memory, Edward IV.

"*Item.* I bequeath my body to be buried with the body of my lord at Windsor, without pompous interring or costly expenses done thereabout. *Item.* Whereas I have no worldly goods to do the queen's grace, my dearest daughter, a pleasure with, neither to reward any of my children, according to my heart and mind, I beseech God Almighty to bless her grace with all her noble issue, and with as good a heart and mind as may be, I give her grace my blessing, and al.

<sup>1</sup> Leland, Collectanea, vol. iv. p. 249.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Memoir of Elizabeth of York, by sir Harris Nicolas.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in *Londinum Redivivum*, by Malcolm, from *Annales Abbate de Bermondsey*, formerly belonging to the Howard family, now in the British Museum.

<sup>5</sup> The noble panelled halls and state-chambers in this convent were, in 1804, standing nearly in the same state as when Elizabeth occupied them.

the aforesaid my children. *Item.* I will that such small stuff and goods that I have, be disposed truly in the contentation of my debts, and for the health of my soul, as far as they will extend. *Item.* That if any of my blood will wish to have any of my said stuff, to me pertaining, I will they have the preferment before all others. And of this my present testament I make and ordain my executors—that is to say, John Ingilby, prior of the Charter-house of Shene, William Sutton and Thomas Brent, doctors. And I beseech my said dearest daughter, the queen's grace, and my son, Thomas, marquis of Dorset, to put their good wills and help, for the performance of this my testament. In witness whereof to this my testament, these witnesses—John, abbot of Bermondsey, and Benedict Cui, doctor of physic. Given the year and day aforesaid."

The daughter of Elizabeth attended her death-bed, and paid her affectionate attention; the queen alone was prevented, having taken to her chamber, preparatory to the birth of the princess Margaret. Elizabeth died the Friday before Whitsuntide, and as she expressed an earnest wish for speedy and private burial, her funeral took place on Whitsunday, 1492. Her will shows that she died destitute of personal property; but that is no proof of previous persecution, since several of our queens, who were possessed of the undivided dower appanage, and whose children were provided for, died not much richer.<sup>1</sup> Indeed it was not easy, that era, for persons, who had only a life income, to invest their savings securely; therefore they seldom made any.

Elizabeth had four daughters wholly dependent on her for support, since the calamities of the times had left them dowerless; and, after the death of their mother, the queen, their sister, was much impoverished by their maintenance. The great possessions of the house of York were chiefly in the grasp of the old avaricious duchess, Cicely of York, who survived her hated daughter-in-law several years. Edward IV. had endowed his proud mother as if she were a queen-dowager; while his wife was dowered on property to which he possessed no real title.

Some discontented Yorkist, who witnessed the parsimonious funeral of Elizabeth, has described it, and preserved the interesting fact, that the only lady who accompanied the corpse of the queen, on its passage from the river to Windsor Castle, was one Mistress Grace, a natural daughter of Edward IV.<sup>2</sup>

"On Whitsunday, the queen-dowager's corpse was conveyed by water to Windsor, and there privily, through the little park, conducted unto the castle, without any ringing of bells or receiving of the dean, but only accompanied by the prior of the Charter-house, and Dr. Brent, Mr. Haute,<sup>3</sup> and Mistress Grace (a bastard daughter of king Edward IV.), and no other gentlewoman; and, as it was told to me, the priest of the college received her in the castle (Windsor), and so privily, about eleven of the clock, she was buried, without any solemn dirge done for her obit. On the morn thither came Audley, bishop of Rochester, to do the office, but that day nothing was done solemnly for her saving; also a hearse, such as they use for the common people, with wooden candlesticks about it, and a black (pall) of cloth of gold on it, four candlesticks of silver gilt, every one having a taper of no great weight.

<sup>1</sup> See volume ii., lives of Eleanora of Castille and Marguerite of France, whose creditors were not paid till long after their deaths. Queen Philippa died in debt.

<sup>2</sup> Arundel MSS. 30.

<sup>3</sup> This name is not very legible.

"On the Tuesday hither came, by water, king Edward's three daughters, the lady Anne, the lady Katherine, and the lady Bridget (the nun-princess), from Dartford, accompanied by the marchioness of Dorset, the daughter of the duke of Buckingham; the queen's niece,<sup>1</sup> the daughter of the marquis of Dorset; lady Herbert, also niece to the queen; dame Katherine Gray; dame Guilford (governess to the children of Elizabeth of York); their gentlewomen walked behind the three daughters of the dead. Also, that Tuesday came the marquis of Dorset, son to the queen; the earl of Essex, her brother-in-law; and the viscount Welles, her son-in-law. And that night began the dirge. But neither at the dirge were the twelve poor men clad in black, but a dozen divers old men,"—that is, old men dressed in the many-coloured garments of poverty,—“and they held old torches and torches' ends. And the next morning one of the canons, called master Vaughan, sang Our Lady mass, at the which the lord Dorset offered a piece of gold; he kneeled at the hearse-head. The ladies came not to the mass of requiem, and the lords sat about in the quire. My lady Anne came to offer the mass-penny, and her officers-at-arms went before her; she offered the penny at the head of the queen, wherefore she had the carpet and the cushion. And the viscount Welles took his (wife's) offering, and dame Katherine Gray bare the lady Anne's train; every one of the king's daughters offered. The marquis of Dorset offered a piece of gold, and all the lords at their pleasure; the poor knights of Windsor, dean, canons, yeomen, and officers-at-arms, all offered, and after mass the lord marquis paid the cost of the funeral.”

At the east end of St. George's chapel, north aisle, is the tomb of Edward IV., being a monument of steel, representing a pair of gates between two towers, of ancient Gothic architecture.<sup>2</sup> On a flat stone at the foot of this monument are engraven, in old English characters, the words,

**King Edward and his Queen, Elizabeth Woodville.**

In 1810, when the place of sepulture for the family of George III. was in course of preparation, at the east end of St. George's chapel, an excavation was formed in the solid bed of chalk, of the full size of the edifice above, when two stone coffins, containing the bodies of queen Elizabeth Woodville and her son prince George,<sup>3</sup> were discovered, fifteen feet below the surface: thus realising the emphatic words of Southey—

<p>“Thou, Elizabeth, art here: Thou to whom all griefs were known;</p>	<p>Who wert placed upon the bier In happier hour than on a throne.”</p>
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<sup>1</sup> Daughter of her sister Katherine, who married Buckingham.

<sup>2</sup> This beautiful work of art is said to be by the hand of Quentin Matsys, the Flemish blacksmith-painter; it has the appearance of black lace.

<sup>3</sup> The third son of Elizabeth, who died in infancy. The coffin of her second daughter, the princess Mary, a beautiful girl of fifteen, who died the year before her father, was soon after discovered. A curl of hair, of the most exquisite pale gold, had insinuated itself through the chinks of the coffin; it was cut off, and is in fine preservation.

## ANNE OF WARWICK, QUEEN OF RICHARD III.

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**Anne of Warwick**, last Plantagenet queen—Place of her birth—Coronets of York and Lancaster—Her armorial bearings—Parentage—Childhood—Richard of Gloucester—His early acquaintance with Anne—Anne at Calais—Marriage of her sister—Returns to England—Embarks with her family—Naval battle—Distress before Calais—Lands in France—Marriage with Edward prince of Wales—Remains with queen Margaret—Tewksbury—Richard of Gloucester wishes to marry her—Her aversion—She is concealed by Clarence—Richard discovers her—She resides with her uncle—Disputes regarding her property—Compelled to marry Richard—Divorce meditated—Birth of her son—Residence at Middleham—Death of Edward IV.—Gloucester departs for London—Anne's arrival at the Tower—Coronation—Her progress to the north—Her son—Re-coronation of Richard and Anne at York—Bribe to the queen—Death of her son—Her fatal grief—Rumours of divorce—Conversation of her husband regarding her—Rumours of her death—Her alarm and complaints—Her kindness to Elizabeth of York—The queen's death and burial.

**ANNE OF WARWICK**, the last of our Plantagenet queens, and the first who had previously borne the title of princess of Wales,<sup>1</sup> was born at Warwick Castle, in the year 1454.<sup>2</sup> On each side of the faded, melancholy portrait of this unfortunate lady, in the pictorial history of her maternal ancestry, called the Rous Roll, two mysterious hands are introduced, offering to her the rival crowns of York and Lancaster; while the white bear, the cognizance assumed by her mighty sire, Warwick

<sup>1</sup> There have been but six princesses of Wales in England: the three first were left widows; and it is singular, that although two of them were afterwards queen-consorts, neither of them derived that dignity from the prince of Wales she had wedded. The first princess of Wales, Joanna, the widow of Edward the Black Prince, died of a broken heart. The miseries of Anne of Warwick, the widow of Edward of Lancaster, prince of Wales, this memoir will show. The misfortunes of Katharine of Arragon, consort of Henry VIII., and widow to Arthur prince of Wales, will be related in the course of the next volume. Caroline of Anspach, consort of George II., after a lapse of two hundred years, was the only princess of Wales who succeeded happily to the throne-matrimonial of this country. Augusta of Saxe-Gotha, widow to Frederic prince of Wales, lost a beloved husband in the prime of life, and never was queen. The troublous career of the sixth princess of Wales, Caroline of Brunswick, is still in public memory.

<sup>2</sup> Rous Roll, Herald's College. This represents the great earl of Warwick with the Neville bull at his feet, though after his marriage he assumed the Beauchamp bear and ragged staff.

the king-maker, lies muzzled at her feet, as if the royal lions of Plantagenet had quelled the pride of that hitherto tameless bear, on the blood-stained heath of Barnet.

The principal events which marked the career of her father have been traced in the memoirs of the two preceding queens. Richard Neville, surnamed the king-making earl of Warwick, was heir, in right of the countess his mother, to the vast inheritance of the Montagues, earls of Salisbury. He aggrandized himself in a higher degree by his union, in 1448, with Anne, the sister of Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, who had become sole heiress of that mighty line, by the early death of her niece the preceding year. Richard was soon after summoned to the house of lords, in right of his wife, as earl of Warwick. He possessed an income of 22,000 marks per annum, but had no male heir, his family consisting but of two daughters; the eldest, lady Isabel,<sup>1</sup> was very handsome. Bucke calls lady Anne "the better woman of the two," but he gives no reason for the epithet.

When, on the convalescence of king Henry, Margaret of Anjou recovered her former influence in the government, Warwick, having good reason to dread her vengeance, withdrew, with his countess and young daughters, to his government of Calais, where much of the childhood and early youth of the lady Anne were spent. Occasionally, indeed, when the star of York was in the ascendant, Warwick brought the ladies of his family, either to his feudal castle, or his residence in Warwick Lane. The site of this mansion is still known by the name of Warwick Court. Here the earl exercised semi-barbarous hospitality, in the year 1458,<sup>2</sup> when a pacification was attempted, between the warring houses of York and Lancaster; six hundred of the retainers of Anne's father were quartered in Warwick Lane, "all dressed alike in red jackets, with the bear and ragged staff embroidered both before and behind. At Warwick House, six oxen were daily devoured for breakfast, and all the taverns about St. Paul's and Newgate Street were full of Warwick's meat, for any one who could claim acquaintance with that earl's red-jacketed gentry might resort to his flesh-pots, and, sticking his dagger therein, carry off as much beef as could be taken on a long dagger."

At this period the closest connexion subsisted between the families of the duke of York and the earl of Warwick. Richard Plantagenet, afterwards Richard III., was two years older than the lady Anne; he was born October 2d, 1452, at his father's princely castle of Fotheringay. He was the youngest son of Richard duke of York and his duchess Cicely, the earl of Warwick's aunt. "At his nativity," says Rous, a contemporary chronicler, "the scorpion was in the ascendant; he came into the world with teeth, and with a head of hair reaching to his shoulders. He was small of stature, with a short face and unequal shoulders, the right being higher than the left."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Born at Warwick Castle, 1451. Rous Roll, Herald's College.

<sup>2</sup> Stow's London.

<sup>3</sup> The oft-quoted testimony of the old countess of Desmond ought not to invalidate this statement; for many a lady would think any prince handsome who had danced with her. Rous knew Richard well; he not only delineated him with the pen, but with pencil.—See the Rous Roll.

Passing over events already related, that led to the deposition of Henry VI., positive proof may be found, that Anne of Warwick and Richard of Gloucester were companions, when he was about fourteen, and she twelve years old. After Richard had been created duke of Gloucester, at his brother's coronation, it is highly probable he was assigned to the guardianship of the earl of Warwick, at Middleham Castle; for, at the grand enthronization of George Neville, the uncle of Anne, as archbishop of York, Richard was a guest at York Palace, seated in the place of honour, in the chief banqueting-room, upon the dais, under a cloth of estate or canopy, with the countess of Westmoreland on his left hand; his sister, the duchess of Suffolk, on his right; and the noble maidens his cousins, the lady Anne and the lady Isabel, seated opposite to him.<sup>1</sup> These ladies must have been placed there expressly to please the prince, by affording him companions of his own age, since the countess of Warwick, their mother, sat at the second table, in a place much lower in dignity. Richard being the son of lady Anne's great-aunt, an intimacy naturally subsisted between such near relatives. Majerres, a Flemish annalist, affirms that Richard had formed a very strong affection for his cousin Anne; but succeeding events proved, that the lady did not bestow the same regard on him which her sister Isabel did on his brother Clarence, nor was it to be expected, considering his disagreeable person and temper. As lady Anne did not smile on her crook-backed cousin, there was no inducement for him to forsake the cause of his brother, king Edward.

It was in vain his brother Clarence said, in a conference with Warwick, "By sweet St. George I swear, that if my brother Gloucester would join me, I would make Edward know we were all one man's sons, which should be nearer to him than strangers of his wife's blood."<sup>2</sup>

Anne was, at this juncture, with her mother and sister, at Calais. "For," continues Hall,<sup>3</sup> "the earl of Warwick and the duke of Clarence sailed directly thither, where they were solemnly received and joyously entertained by the countess of Warwick and her two daughters; and after the duke had sworn on the sacrament, ever to keep part and promise with the earl, he married Isabel in the Lady Church of Calais, in the presence of the countess and her daughter Anne."

The earl of Warwick, accompanied by his countess and lady Anne, returned with the newly-wedded pair to England, where he and his son-in-law soon raised a civil war, that shook the throne of Edward IV. After the loss of the battle of Edgecote, the earl of Warwick escaped with his family to Dartmouth, where they were taken on board a fleet of which he was master.

On the voyage, they encountered the young earl of Rivers, with the Yorkist fleet, who gave their ships battle, and took all excepting the vessel containing the Neville family. While this ship was flying from the victorious enemy, a dreadful tempest arose, and the ladies on board were afflicted at once with terror of wreck, and the oppression of seasickness. To add to their troubles, the duchess of Clarence was taken

<sup>1</sup> Leland's Collectanea, vol. vi. p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Hall, p. 272.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. pp. 271, 272.



in labour, with her first child.<sup>1</sup> In the midst of this accumulation of disasters, the tempest-tossed bark made the offing of Calais; but in spite of the distress on board, Vaublere, whom Warwick had left as his lieutenant, held out the town against him, and would not permit the ladies to land; he, however, sent two flagons of wine on board, for the duchess of Clarence, with a private message, assuring Warwick "that the refusal arose from the townspeople," and advising him to make some other port in France.<sup>2</sup> The duchess of Clarence soon after gave birth, on board ship, to the babe who had chosen so inappropriate a time for his entrance into a troublesome world, and the whole family landed safely at Dieppe, the beginning of May, 1470. When they were able to travel, the lady Anne, her mother and sister, attended by Clarence and Warwick, journeyed across France to Amboise, where they were graciously received by Louis XI., and that treaty was finally completed which made Anne the wife of Edward, the gallant heir of Lancaster.<sup>3</sup>

This portion of the life of Anne of Warwick is so inextricably interwoven with that of her mother-in-law, queen Margaret, that it were vain to repeat it a second time. Suffice it to observe that the bride was in her seventeenth, the bridegroom in his nineteenth year, and that Prevost affirms that the match was one of ardent love on both sides. The prince was well educated, refined in manners, and, moreover, his portrait in the Rous Roll bears out the tradition that he was eminently handsome. The ill-fated pair remained in each other's company from their marriage at Angers, in August 1470, till the fatal field of Tewksbury, May 4th, 1471.<sup>4</sup>

Although the testimony of George Bucke must be received with the utmost caution,<sup>5</sup> yet he quotes a contemporary Flemish chronicler,<sup>6</sup> who affirms that "Anne was with her husband, Edward of Lancaster, when that unfortunate prince was hurried before Edward IV., after the battle of Tewksbury, and that it was observed, Richard duke of Gloucester was the only person present who did not draw his sword on the royal captive, out of respect to the presence of Anne, as she was the near relative of his mother, and a person whose affections he had always desired to possess."

English chroniclers, however, affirm that, at this very moment Anne was with her unhappy mother-in-law, queen Margaret. After Margaret was taken away to the Tower of London, Clarence privately abducted his sister-in-law, under the pretence of protecting her. As he was her sister's husband, he was exceedingly unwilling to divide the united inheritance of Warwick and Salisbury, which he knew must be done, if his brother Gloucester carried into execution his avowed intention of marrying Anne. But very different was the conduct of the young widow

<sup>1</sup> Hall, p. 279.

<sup>2</sup> Comines.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Hall, p. 280.

<sup>5</sup> Sir John Bucke was in the service of Richard III., and high in his favour; he was beheaded at Leicester after the battle of Bosworth, and his family nearly ruined. For this reason the utmost degree of personal prejudice guides the pen of Richard's historian, his descendant, when vindicating that usurper, and aspersing the reputation of every connexion of Henry VII.

<sup>6</sup> W. Kennet. Bucke, vol. i. p. 549.

of the prince of Wales, from that described by Shakspeare. Instead of acting as chief mourner to the hearse of her husband's murdered father, she was sedulously concealing herself from her abhorred cousin; enduring every privation to avoid his notice, and concurring with all the schemes of her self-interested brother-in-law, Clarence, so completely, as to descend from the rank of princess of Wales, to the disguise of a servant, in a mean house in London, in the hopes of eluding the search of Gloucester; incidents too romantic to be believed without the testimony of a Latin chronicler of the highest authority,<sup>1</sup> who affirms it in the following words:—"Richard duke of Gloucester wished to discover Anne, the youngest daughter of the earl of Warwick, in order to marry her; this was much disapproved by his brother, the duke of Clarence, who did not wish to divide his wife's inheritance. He, therefore, hid the young lady. But the cunning of the duke of Gloucester discovered her, in the disguise of a cook-maid in the city of London, and he immediately transferred her to the sanctuary of St. Martin's le Grand." She needed this asylum, because she was under the attainer in which her hapless mother and queen Margaret were included.

The unfortunate widow of prince Edward was, after this, removed to the protection of her uncle George,<sup>2</sup> the archbishop of York, and was even permitted to visit and comfort her mother-in-law, queen Margaret, at the Tower; but as she still resisted marrying Richard, she was deprived of her uncle's protection, her last refuge against her hated cousin.

The unfortunate mother of Anne remained in the sanctuary she had first taken, till the same year. A letter of Paston's, dated 1473, observes, "that the countess of Warwick is out of Beaulieu sanctuary and that sir James Tyrrel<sup>3</sup> conveyeth her northwards; but the duke of Clarence liketh it not." And on April 2d, 1473, he notifies that "the world seemeth queasy, for all the persons about the king's person have sent for their armour, on account of the quarrel regarding the inheritance of Anne."<sup>4</sup>

The dispute was debated in council, and the king made an award, assigning certain lands to the duke of Gloucester, and adjudging the rest of the estate to Clarence. This award was made at the expense of Anne, countess of Warwick, the mother of the young ladies, and the true heiress of the vast estates of De Spencer and Beauchamp. The act of parliament specified "that the countess of Warwick was no more

<sup>1</sup> Continuator of Croyland Chronicle, p. 557. This person, from some of his expressions, appears to have at one time belonged to the privy council of Edward IV.

<sup>2</sup> Edward IV. had, since his restoration, pretended to show some favour to the archbishop, had hunted with him at Windsor, and even invited himself to dine with him at the More; upon which the archbishop foolishly took from a hiding-place all the plate and jewels he had concealed before the battles of Tewksbury and Barnet, and borrowed much more of his acquaintance. Edward, instead of visiting, arrested him, seized all these riches, and sent him prisoner to Hammes. Leland's Collectanea, vol. i. p. 509.

<sup>3</sup> The same functionary who afterwards murdered the princes of York.

<sup>4</sup> Parliamentary Rolls, 1473.

to be considered, in the award of her inheritance, than if she were dead."<sup>1</sup> In fact, Rous accuses Richard of incarcerating, during his life, "the venerable countess Anna, the rightful mistress of the Warwick patrimony, when in her distress she fled to him, as her son-in-law, for protection," an ill-deed which has not commonly been enumerated in the ample list of Richard's iniquities.

The marriage of the lady Anne and Richard duke of Gloucester took place at Westminster,<sup>2</sup> 1473, probably a few days before the date of Paston's letter. Prevost affirms she was compelled by violence to marry Richard. Some illegalities were connected with this ceremony, assuredly arising from the reluctance of the bride, since the Parliamentary Rolls of the next year contain a curious act, empowering the duke of Gloucester "to continue the full possession and enjoyment of Anne's property, even if she were to *divorce him*, provided he did his best to be reconciled and re-married to her:"—ominous clauses relating to a wedlock of a few months!—but which prove that Anne meditated availing herself of some informality in her abhorred marriage; but if she had done so, her husband would have remained in possession of her property. The informalities most likely arose from the want of the proper bulls to dispense with relationship; and as the free consent of both bride and bridegroom was an indispensable preliminary to such dispensation, the absence of these legal instruments negatively prove that the unfortunate Anne Neville never consented to her second marriage. The birth of her son Edward at Middleham Castle, 1474, probably reconciled the unhappy duchess of Gloucester to her miserable fate; but that her marriage was never legalised, may be guessed by the rumours of a subsequent period, when the venomous hunchback, her cousin-husband, meditated in his turn divorcing *her*.

Richard and Anne lived chiefly at Middleham Castle, in Yorkshire, an abode convenient for the office borne by the duke, as governor of the northern marches. As a very active war was proceeding with Scotland, in the course of which Richard won several battles, and captured Edinburgh,<sup>3</sup> his reluctant wife was not troubled much with his company, but devoted herself to her boy, in whom all her affections were centred, and the very springs of her life wound up in his welfare. During her abode at Middleham she lost her sister, the duchess of Clarence, who died December 12th, 1476.

The death of Edward IV. caused a great change in the life of Anne. The duke of Gloucester, who had very recently returned from Scotland, left Anne and his boy at Middleham, when he departed, with a troop of horse, to intercept his young nephew, Edward V., on progress to London. Richard's household-book<sup>4</sup> at Middleham, affords some notices regarding the son of Anne of Warwick, during his father's absence. Geoffry Frank is allowed 22s. 9d. for greencloth, and 1s. 8d. for making it into gowns for my lord prince and Mr. Neville; 5s. for choosing a

<sup>1</sup> Carte, Reign of Edward IV., 1473.

<sup>2</sup> Sprott Fragment, as to place; but it gives date, 1474. Hutton gives 1473, as the date.

<sup>3</sup> Holingshed.

<sup>4</sup> Harleian MSS., 433.

king of West Witton in some frolic of rush-bearing, and 5s. for a feather for my lord prince; and Dirick, shoemaker, had 13s. 1d. for his shoes; and Jane Collins, his nurse, 100s. for her year's wages. Among the expenses which seem to have occurred on the progress of the young prince up to London, on the occasion of the coronation of his parents, are his offerings at Fountain's Abbey, and other religious houses. For mending his whip, 2d., and 6s. 8d. to two of his men, Medcalf and Pacok, for running on foot by the side of his carriage.

After a succession of astounding crimes, Richard effected the usurpation of his nephew's throne, and Anne of Warwick was placed in the situation of consort to an English monarch. She arrived in London, with her son, in time to share her husband's coronation, yet we should think her arrival was but just before that event, as her rich dress, for the occasion, was only bought two days preceding the ceremony. There is an order to "Piers Curteys," to deliver for the use of the queen, four and a half yards of *purpille* cloth of gold, upon damask, July 3d." Short time had the tirewomen of Anne of Warwick to display their skill in the fitting of her regal robes, since this garment was to be worn on the 5th of the same month. Sunday, July 4th, Richard, who had previously been proclaimed king, conducted his queen and her son, in great state, by water, from Baynard's Castle to the Tower, where his hapless little prisoners were made to vacate the royal apartments, and were consigned to a tower near the Water Gate, since called the Bloody Tower.<sup>2</sup> The same day Anne's only child, Edward, was created prince of Wales.<sup>3</sup> The grand procession of the king and queen, and their young heir, through the city, took place on the morrow, when they were attended from the Tower by four thousand northern partisans, whom the king and queen called "gentlemen of the north," but who were regarded by the citizens as an ungente and suspicious-looking pack of vagabonds. The next day, July 5th, the coronation of Richard and his queen took place, with an unusual display of pageantry, great part of which had been prepared for the coronation of the hapless Edward V.

"On the following day," says Grafton, "the king, with queen Anne, his wife, came down out of the whitehall into the great hall of Westminster, and went directly to the King's Bench, where they sat some time, and from thence the king and queen walked *barefoot* upon striped cloth unto king Edward's shrine, all their nobility going before them, every lord in his degree."

The duke of Norfolk bore the king's crown before him, between both his hands, and the duke of Buckingham, with a white staff in his hand, bore the royal hunchback's train. "Queen Anne had both earls and barons preceding her. The earl of Huntingdon bore her sceptre; viscount Lisle the rod with the dove; and the earl of Wiltshire her crown."

<sup>1</sup> Harleian MSS., 433, 1598.

<sup>2</sup> Hutton's Bosworth. Hutton affirms, from Tyrrel and Dighton's confessions, that this tower was the scene of the deaths of Edward V. and his brother, in the same month that Richard III. was crowned.

<sup>3</sup> Hall and More.

"Then came," continues a contemporary manuscript,<sup>1</sup> "our sovereign lady the queen, over her head a canopy, and at every corner a bell of gold; and on her head a circlet of gold, with many precious stones set therein; and on *every side* of the queen went a bishop; and my lady of Richmond<sup>2</sup> bare the queen's train. So they went from St. Edward's shrine to the seats of state by the altar, and when the king and queen were seated, there came forth their highnesses' priests and clerks, singing most delectably, Latin and prick-song,<sup>3</sup> full royally." This part of the ceremonial concluded, "the king and queen came down from their seats of estate, and the king had great observance and service." Our authority states, that the king and queen "put off their robes, and stood all naked from their waists upwards,<sup>4</sup> till the bishop had anointed them." Their majesties afterwards assumed their robes of cloth of gold, and cardinal Morton crowned them both with much solemnity. The priests and clerks sung "Te Deum" with great royalty. The homage was paid at that part of the mass called the offertory, during which time the queen sat with the bishops and peeresses, while Richard received the kiss of fealty from his peers. The bishops of Exeter and Norwich stood on each side the queen; the countess of Richmond was on her left hand, and the duchess of Norfolk knelt behind the queen with the other ladies. Then the king and queen came down to the high altar and kneeled, and anon the cardinal turned him about with the holy sacrament in his hand, and parted it between them both, and thus they received the good Lord."

Their crowns were offered, as usual, at St. Edward's shrine. The king proceeded out of the abbey-church, and the queen followed, bearing the sceptre in her right hand, and the dove with the rod in her left, so going forth till they came to the high dais at Westminster Hall; and when they came there, they left their canopies standing, and retired to their chamber. Meantime the duke of Norfolk<sup>5</sup> came riding into Westminster Hall, his horse trapped with cloth of gold down to the ground, and he voided it of all people but the king's servants. And the duke of Buckingham called to the marshal, saying how "the king would have his lords sit at four boards in the hall;" and at four o'clock the king and queen came to the high dais. On the queen's right hand stood my lady Surrey, and on her left the lady Nottingham, holding a canopy of state over her head.

<sup>1</sup> Harleian MSS., 2115. Communicated by John Bruce, Esq.

<sup>2</sup> Mother of Henry Tudor, afterwards Henry VII.

<sup>3</sup> Meaning they sang from musical notes set in alternate parts.

<sup>4</sup> This expression, which appears startling at first, merely implies the fact that Richard and Anne were then divested of their regal mantles and insignia, preparatory to being anointed, and remained in their under garments. The attire in use, during the administration of that rite, is particularly described in the "Order for the coronation of the kings of France," as "close-fitting tunics of silk, having apertures on the breast, and between the shoulders, which at the time prescribed were drawn aside, in order that the consecrating prelate might trace the sign of the cross, with the tip of the thumb moistened in the chrism, as ordained in the pontifical."

<sup>5</sup> Grafton asserts that there were three duchesses of Norfolk present. If so, the infant wife of Richard duke of York must have been one of them.

"The king sat at the middle of the table, the queen at the left hand of the table, and on each side of her stood a countess, holding a cloth of pleasance when she listed to drink. The champion of England after dinner rode into the Hall, and made his challenge without being gaisayed. The lord mayor served the king and queen with ipocras, wafers, and sweet wine, and by that time it was dark night. Anon came into the Hall great lights of wax torches and *torchettes*, and as soon as the lights came up the hall, the lords and ladies went up to the king, and made their obeisance: and anon the king and queen rose up and went to their chambers, and every man and woman departed and went their ways, where it liked them best."<sup>1</sup>

After the coronation, queen Anne went to Windsor Castle, with the king and her son. Here Richard left her, while he undertook a devious progress, ending at Tewksbury. The queen and prince then commenced a splendid progress, in which they were attended by many prelates and peers, and the Spanish ambassador, who had come to propose an alliance between the eldest daughter of his sovereigns, Ferdinand and Isabella, and the son of Richard III. The queen took up her abode at Warwick Castle, the place of her birth, and the grand feudal seat of her father, which belonged to the young earl of Warwick (the son of her sister Isabel and the duke of Clarence), and it is especially noted that the queen brought him with her.<sup>2</sup> Richard III. joined his queen at Warwick Castle, where they kept court with great magnificence for a week. It must have been at this visit that the portraits of queen Anne, of Richard III., and their son, were added to the Rous Roll. The popular opinion concerning Richard's deformity is verified by the portrait; for his figure, if not crooked, is decidedly hunchy; nor must this appearance be attributed to the artist's lack of skill in delineating the human form, for the neighbouring portrait, by the same hand, representing Anne's father, the great earl of Warwick, is as finely proportioned as if meant for a model of St. George. Richard, on the contrary, has high thick shoulders, and no neck. Surely, if the king's ungainly figure had not been matter of great notoriety, an artist capable of making such a noble sketch as that of the earl, would not have brought the king's ears and shoulders in quite such close contact.<sup>3</sup> Warwick was dead, Richard was alive, when this series of portraits closes; therefore, if any pictorial flattery exists, in all probability Richard had the advantage of it.

Among other contemporary descriptions of Richard not generally

<sup>1</sup> Grafton, collated with the Harleian MSS., p. 2115.

<sup>2</sup> The whole paragraph is from Rous's Latin Chronicle. Rous himself was at Warwick Castle at this time; for he was a priest belonging to the Neville family, and lived at Guy's Cliff.

<sup>3</sup> Richard's ugliness, frowardness and ill-temper, from his birth, are mentioned by Holingshed (quarto edition, p. 362, vol. iii., 1806), likewise his deformity. Holingshed's authority must have been a contemporary, since he mentions the princess Katherine, daughter to Edward IV., as still alive, in the preceding page. Sir Thomas More likewise asserts the same; his father, sir John More, who was an old judge, must have seen Richard, and had no great reason to be fond of Henry VII., since that king had sent him to prison because his son, sir Thomas More, as speaker of the commons, opposed some of his pecuniary extortions.

known, is the following metrical portrait.<sup>1</sup> The author seems inclined to apologise for drawing him as he really was :—

<p>"The king's own brother, he, I mean, Who was deformed by nature : Crook-backed and ill-conditioned ;</p>	<p>Worse-faced—an ugly creature ; Yet a great peer, for princes—peers— Are not always beaux.</p>
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From Warwick Castle queen Anne and king Richard went to Coventry, where was dated August 15th, 1483, a memorandum of an account of 180*l.* owed to Richard Gowles, mercer, London, for goods delivered for the use of queen Anne, as specified in bills in the care of John Kendal, the king's secretary. The court arrived at York, August 31. The re-coronation of the king and queen, likewise the re-investiture of prince Edward of Gloucester as prince of Wales, took place soon after, at this city ; measures which must have originated in the fact, that the sons of Edward IV. having been put to death during the northern progress of the court, the usurper considered that oaths of allegiance, taken at the re-coronation, would be more legal than when the right heirs were alive. The overflowing paternity of Richard, which, perhaps, urged him to commit some of his crimes, thus speaks, in his patents for creating his son prince of Wales : "Whose singular wit and endowments of nature wherewith (his young age considered) he is remarkably furnished, do portend, by the favour of God, that he will make an honest man."<sup>2</sup> But small chance was there for such a miracle, if his life had been spared. It is curious that Richard III. should express hopes for his son's future honesty, at the very moment when he was putting him in possession of his murdered cousins' property.

After the coronation had been performed in York cathedral, queen Anne walked in grand procession through the streets of the city, holding her little son by the right hand ; he wore the demi-crown appointed for the heir of England.

The Middleham household-book mentions, that five marks were paid to Michell Wharton, for bringing the prince's jewels from York, on this occasion. The same document proves that the court were at Pontefract, September 15th ; that fearful fortress, recently stained with the blood of Richard's victims. Richard gave, by the way, in charity to a poor woman, 3*s.* 6*d.* ; the charge of baiting the royal charette was 2*d.* ; and the expenses of the removal of my lord prince's household to Pontefract, 24*s.*

A formidable insurrection, headed by the duke of Buckingham, recalled Richard to the metropolis ; he left his son, for security, among his northern friends, but queen Anne accompanied her husband.

It is a doubtful point whether Anne approved of the crimes which thus advanced her son. Tradition declares she abhorred them, but parliamentary documents prove she shared with sir James Tyrrel the plan

<sup>1</sup> A curious MS., in the possession of sir Thomas Phillipps, of Middle Hill, supposed to be written by R. Glover, a herald ; it is called "The Honour of Cheshire."

<sup>2</sup> White Kennet's notes to Bucke. The prince was seven years old according to Rous.

der of Richard's opponents, after the rebellion of Buckingham was crushed. She received one hundred marks, the king seven hundred marks, and Sir James Tyrrel two manors from Sir William Knyvet, being the purchase-money for his life. Anne's share of this plunder amounts to considerably more than her proportion of queen-gold.

If Anne had even passively consented to the unrighteous advancement of her family, punishment quickly followed; for her son, on the last day of March, 1484, died at Middleham Castle "an unhappy death."<sup>1</sup> This expression, used by Rous, his family chronicler, leads his readers to imagine that this boy, so deeply idolized by his guilty father, came by his end in some sudden and awful manner. His parents were not with him, but were as near as Nottingham Castle, when he expired. The loss of this child, in whom all Anne's hopes and happiness were garnered, struck to her heart, and she never again knew a moment's health or comfort; she seemed even to court death eagerly. Nor was this dreadful loss her only calamity. Richard had no other child; his declining and miserable consort was not likely to bring another; and if he did not consider her in the way, his guilty and ruffianly satellites certainly did; for they began to whisper dark things concerning the illegality of the king's marriage, and the possibility of its being set aside. As Edward IV.'s parliament considered that it was possible for Anne to divorce Richard in 1474, it cannot be doubted that Richard could have resorted to the same manner of getting rid of her, when queen.

Her evident decline, however, prevented Richard from giving himself any trouble regarding a divorce; yet it did not restrain him from uttering peevish complaints to Rotherham, archbishop of York, regarding his wife's sickliness and disagreeable qualities. Rotherham, who had just been released from as much coercion as a king of England dared offer to a spiritual peer, who had not appeared in open insurrection, ventured to prophesy, from these expressions, "that Richard's queen would suddenly depart from this world." This speech got circulated in the guard-chamber, and gave rise to a report that the queen, whose personal sufferings in a protracted decline had caused her to keep her chamber for some days, was actually dead.

Anne was sitting at her toilette, with her tresses unbound, when this strange rumour was communicated to her. She considered it was the forerunner of her death by violent means, and, in a great agony, ran to her husband, with her hair dishevelled as it was, and with streaming eyes and piteous sobs asked him, "What she had done to deserve death?" Richard, it is expressly said, soothed her with fair words and smiles, bidding her "be of good cheer, for, in sooth, she had no other cause."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Continuator of Croyland. The June following the death of the prince, Richard III. added in his own hand to the audit of expenses paid for the clothing of his son, "whom God pardon"—a proof that a lively remembrance of the boy was still active in the father's heart, and that he lost no opportunity of offering prayer for the small sins, which the object of his guilty ambition might have committed.—See White Kennet's Notes to Bucke.

<sup>2</sup> Ho!ngshed. Sir Thomas More.



The next report which harassed the declining and dying queen was, that her husband was impatient for her demise, that he might give his hand to his niece, the princess Elizabeth of York. This rumour had no influence on the conduct of Anne, since the continuator of the Croyland Chronicle mentions the queen's kindness to her husband's niece, in these words: "The lady Elizabeth (who had been some months out of sanctuary) was sent by her mother to attend the queen at court, at the Christmas festivals kept with great state in Westminster Hall. Elizabeth and her four sisters were received with all honourable courtesy by queen Anne, especially the lady Elizabeth was ranked most familiarly in the queen's favour, who treated her as a sister; but neither society that she loved, nor all the pomp and festivity of royalty, could cure the languor or heal the wound in the queen's breast, for the loss of her son."<sup>1</sup> The young earl of Warwick was, after the death of Richard's son, proclaimed heir to the English throne, and as such took his seat at the royal table,<sup>2</sup> during the lifetime of his aunt, queen Anne. As these honours were withdrawn from the ill-fated boy directly after the death of the queen, it is reasonable to infer that he owed them to some influence she possessed with her husband; since young Warwick, as her sister's son, was her heir as well as his.

Within the year that deprived Anne of her only son, maternal sorrow put an end to her existence, by a decline, slow enough to acquit her husband of poisoning her; a crime of which he is accused by most writers. She died at Westminster Palace, on March 16th, 1485, in the midst of the greatest eclipse of the sun that had happened for many years. Her funeral was most pompous and magnificent. Her husband was present, and was observed to shed tears,<sup>3</sup> deemed hypocritical by the by-stander, but those who knew that he had been brought up with Anne, might suppose that he felt some instinctive yearnings of long companionship, when he saw her laid in that grave where his ambitious interests had caused him to wish her to be. Human nature, with all its conflicting passions and instincts, abounds with such inconsistencies, which are often startlingly apparent in the hardest characters.

The queen was interred near the altar at Westminster, not far from the monument of Anne of Cleves. No memorial marks the spot where the broken heart of the hapless Anne of Warwick found rest, from as much sorrow as could possibly be crowded into the brief span of thirty one years.

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<sup>1</sup> Continuator of Croyland Chronicle. <sup>2</sup> Rous Chronicle. <sup>3</sup> Baker's Chronicle.







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